



INSIDE HISTORY COLLECTION

NEW

Obsessed
with death!

Ice cold

SERIAL KILLERS

What makes them kill? • How do they escape? • Why are they caught?

Killer's victims are carefully selected

Every stage of the hunt
is a part of the ritual

JEFFREY DAHMER

"The Milwaukee Monster"

- CLASSIFICATION: Serial killer
- TRADEMARKS: Rape, dissection, necrophilia and cannibalism
- NUMBER OF VICTIMS: 17
- MURDER METHODS: Strangulation, beheading
- LOCATION: Ohio and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA
- STATUS: Sentenced in 1992 to 16 life sentences. Murdered in prison in 1994.



Defective brain

Organ shaped by gene
defects and abuse



Chess led to murder

Chess nerd Pichushkin tried
to fill a board with corpses

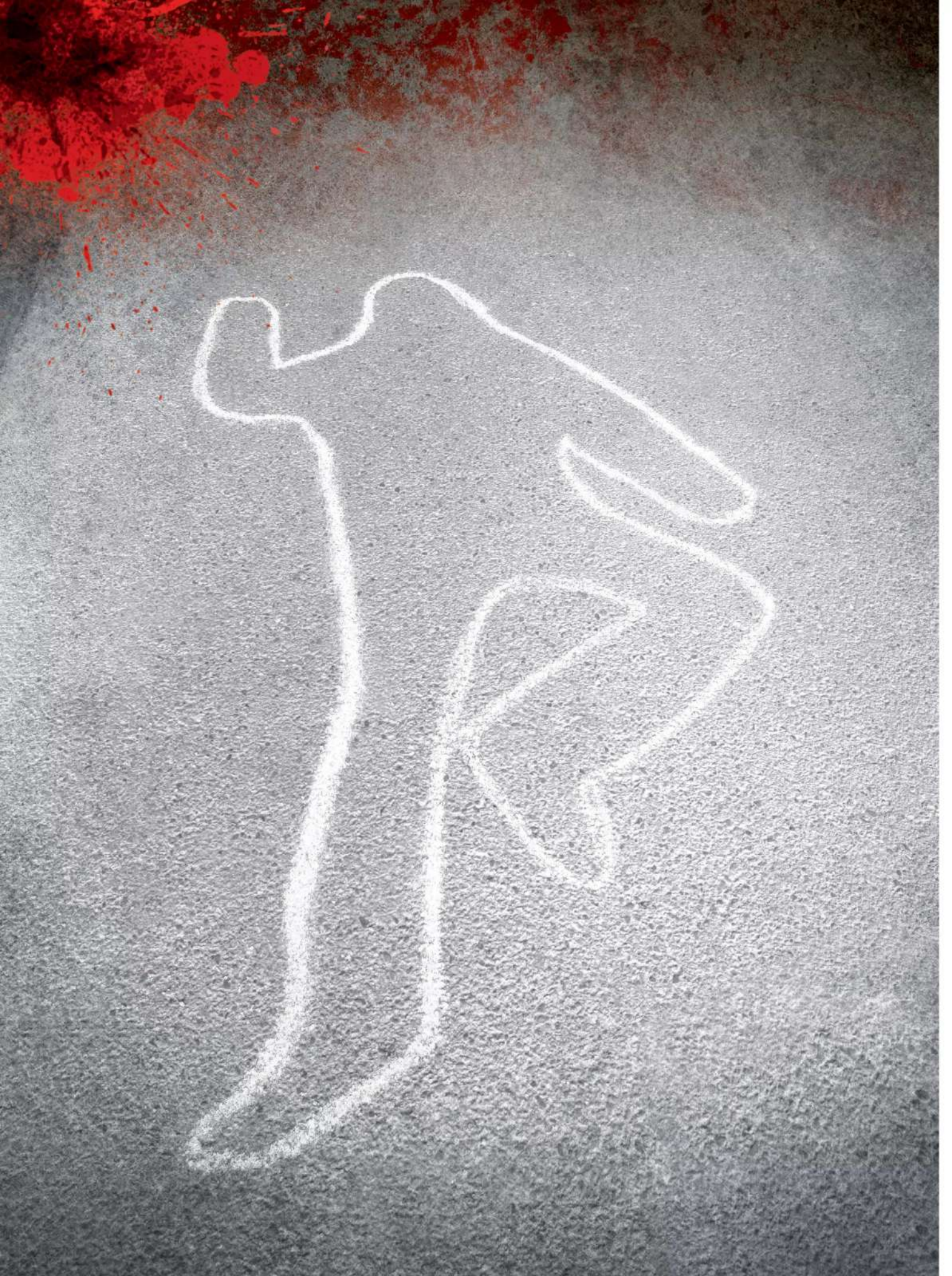


Brutal carnage

Cannibal Dahmer
hacked victims to pieces



BUTCHER OF ROSTOV ♦ BTK ♦ SON OF SAM ♦ GREEN RIVER KILLER ♦ HAIR-OBSESSED STRANGLER



Sister's dolls excited Eckert

As a child, Volker Eckert loved to caress the hair of his sister's dolls. He later transferred the ritual to women – whom he strangled.

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Serial killers get a thrill from slaying

A serial killer is a cold-hearted predator who enjoys the hunt, is driven by ritual, and becomes increasingly dependent on the kick that killing provides. German Volker Eckert, for example, was morbidly obsessed with women's long hair, Jeffrey Dahmer was sexually satisfied by cutting people up and eating pieces of them, Alexander Pichushkin decided to murder as many people as there are squares on a chessboard, and David Berkowitz believed that demons were ordering him to kill. The stories here describe what drives serial killers and how they carry out their murders. The content is violent, chilling – and certainly not for children.

A fascinating read!

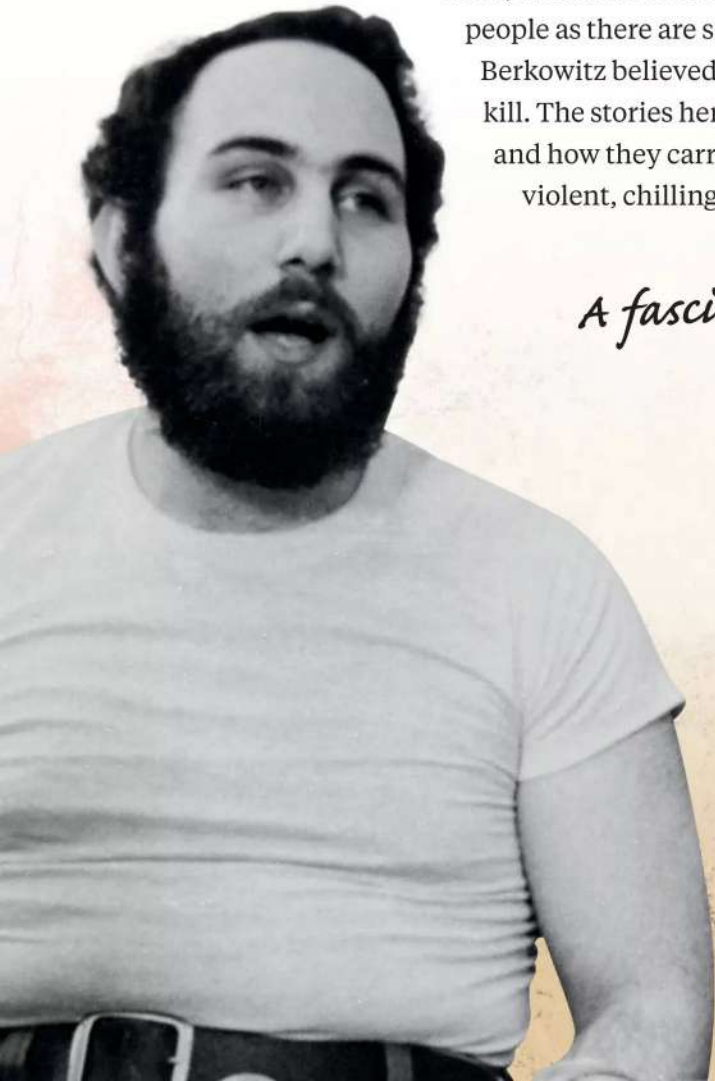


WARNING:
Disturbing content
Includes detailed descriptions
of brutal murders.

A neighbour's barking dog told Berkowitz to kill

David Berkowitz shot eight young women and couples in 12 months – on orders from demons, who spoke through a neighbour's dog.

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Police intensify the hunt for serial killers

Serial killers are people of habit who often kill according to established patterns, a fact exploited by the police. With the help of forensic analysis, personal profiles and communication strategies, investigators are constantly honing their methods to catch those who are driven to kill again and again.

BACKGROUND

Crime scene investigators and forensic scientists are constantly developing new ways to solve crimes, from DNA analysis to a careful examination of the crime scene and victim, which can reveal the killer's profile and background. Was it a crime of passion, or did the victim meet a serial killer who had planned every detail in order to obtain the most pleasure possible?

Three people disappeared without a trace in the Canadian metropolis of Toronto between 2010 and 2012. Local police routinely investigated each case, but there was nothing to immediately indicate that the missing people had been victims of a crime. Perhaps they had committed suicide, or maybe they just wanted to start over in a new place, somewhere no one knew them?

But something caught the attention of the police. The three missing people had a lot in common. They were all middle-aged with roots in Central or Southern Asia, and they were all well-known in Toronto's Gay Village, its homosexual community.

The common denominators might have been random, but they created a pattern. If the three men had been victims of a crime, it was likely that the same perpetrator was behind all three. And if so, and they had been murdered, the culprit was a serial killer.

The FBI defines a serial killer as someone who murders at least two people on different occasions, with a certain amount of time between the attacks. The time aspect distinguishes a serial killer from a mass murderer who, for example, goes into a school and kills several people over a short space of time.

But even though a serial killer waits weeks or months between their killings and often takes long breaks, the

number of murders over the years can easily exceed even the most horrific mass murderer. In the 1990s, Colombian serial killer Luis Garavito – also known as *La Bestia* (The Beast) – wreaked havoc in three South American countries. He ended up being convicted of 138 murders, but police suspect him of killing more than twice as many people.

Although it's not part of the definition of a serial killer, they are often characterised by carrying out murders in a specific way and going after a certain type of victim. Luis Garavito's victims were always easy to recognise. They were boys between the ages of six and 16, who were often

homeless city dwellers or poor farm workers, and they were tied up, tortured and raped before being stabbed to death with either a knife or a screwdriver.

Police use such commonalities to create a profile of a serial killer and his victims. The profile helps investigators link relevant cases together and get a sense of what the offender is like and where they can find him. The missing men in Toronto suggested someone that frequented the same places as middle-aged, gay immigrants, so the police started their investigation in the city's Gay Village.

No body, no crime

In 2013, an anonymous tip sent police on the trail of 61-year-old self-employed landscape gardener Bruce McArthur. The source said that McArthur had had

an affair with two of the missing men, and he didn't deny it. He even said that one had been employed by his small company for a while.

The police didn't target McArthur, but saw him as a witness who could give them insight into the missing men's comings and goings. They found nothing suspicious, and since no bodies had been found, they couldn't even be sure a crime had been committed. So the police dropped the case.

But just two years later, in 2015, the case files were dusted off as, one by one, middle-aged men began to disappear again in Toronto. Although they didn't all perfectly fit the profile, the police were no longer in doubt that there was a link between them. Then, in June 2017, a 49-year-old gay man disappeared without a trace during Toronto's Pride festival, and it became a turning point in the police investigation.

When police searched the man's apartment, they discovered that the name "Bruce" was written in his calendar for the day he disappeared. In addition, a surveillance camera revealed that the man had got into a red car – a 2004 Dodge Caravan – the same day. There were more than 6,000 cars of that model in Toronto, but only four of them were registered in the name Bruce – and one of those was Bruce McArthur, whom police had spoken to four years earlier.

McArthur had subsequently sold his car, but the police managed to track it to a scrapyard and impound it. Once they examined the vehicle, they found traces of DNA that matched the man who'd disappeared during Pride, as well as >>>

138 murders – that's the number Luis Garavito was convicted of. But police suspect he killed more than twice as many.

Serial killers hide their victims – unless they consciously want them to be found.



Body is most important clue in a murder

Without a body, there is no murder case – even if people disappear without trace, and the police suspect foul play. The body is required and is closely examined for evidence.



A victim's body gives the police a lot of important information about the crime. The choice of victim can, for example, say something about the culprit's profile; perhaps he only goes after very young women, or after women of a particular ethnicity. Investigators and forensic scientists examine each millimetre of the crime scene and the victim, and one of the first questions they ask themselves is how the victim

was murdered. A particular method can reveal that it's a serial killer – for example, if the murder was carefully planned and carried out according to a specific ritual, or if the killer had brought a weapon instead of using an object at the crime scene. Police also look for signs of sexual assault or other abuse of the victim. Serial killers often take trophies. Maybe the victim is missing a shoe, a piece of jewellery or

a lock of hair. Is the body dumped in a random place, or is it carefully placed somewhere in a position that suggests a ritual or special plan? How well has the killer cleaned up after himself? A killer who acts out of passion leaves far more evidence than an experienced assailant who knows exactly how to cover his tracks, and perhaps even lays a trail of false clues in the hope of derailing the police investigation.

A single touch can leave traces of DNA

The technique of drawing profiles from DNA evidence is constantly evolving. Investigators can now use quite small samples to find a killer.

In the 1980s, when DNA began to be used in investigations, the police relied on finding something like blood or hair at the crime scene. But in the last ten years, it has become possible to use much smaller samples of DNA to identify individuals.

With a new technique called polymerase chain reaction, a single touch of a crime weapon, a door handle or the victim's clothing may be enough to expose the killer. The technique duplicates DNA molecules to create a volume that can be studied. The process allows for an exponential amplification of the selected regions of DNA, simply by repeating the process.

The technique is already in use, but is still the subject of much debate in science and legal circles, because the risk of errors creeping in increase proportionally with the number of times a sample of DNA is replicated.

Only time will tell how small a DNA trace can be to still give a credible result that can be used to create a profile and convict a killer.

Forensic scientists collect evidence from a crime scene with cotton swabs.



GETTY IMAGES

traces from another man who'd been reported missing two months earlier.

The net was tightening around McArthur, and when police secretly searched his house and cloned the hard drive of his computer, forensic investigators found pictures of the two missing men. In the photos, both men were dead.

The landscape gardener was put under surveillance, and when a Middle Eastern man knocked on his door in January 2018 and was let in, the police decided to act. It probably saved the man's life: he was already tied to McArthur's bed when officers entered.

Police searched the apartment and found photos of several of the missing men. But the most macabre discoveries came to light when police dogs were unleashed in five gardens where McArthur had previously worked as a gardener. Several large plant pots attracted the dogs' interest, and the skeletal remains of six different men were found in the potting compost.

Everything now suggested that the landscape gardener was a brutal serial killer who had sexually exploited his victims, killed and mutilated them, then hidden their body parts around the city. In the ensuing trial, McArthur

confessed to eight murders, but he gave no explanation as to what drove him to commit his crimes.

In February 2019, he was sentenced to life, and men in Toronto's Gay Village breathed a sigh of relief and finally began to feel a little safer.

Profile trapped perpetrator

Bruce McArthur is one of history's more recent serial killers, but he's far from the only one. Serial killers are found in all guises, such as Chinese Yang Xinhai, who around the turn of the millennium broke into isolated houses and killed all those inside with an axe, hammer or

shovel, and Austria's "Black Widow", Elfriede Blauensteiner, who in the '80s and '90s talked elderly people into including her in their wills, then killed them with poison.

In many cases, police have a hard time detecting a serial killer because the bodies have been hidden and never show up, making it uncertain whether a crime has taken place or not. Although McArthur was careful to cut up his victims and bury them in plant pots, he was exposed because police could draw a profile of the killer and victims. With the profile as a tool, the investigators could link the crimes together, and with the help of skilled police work, focus on McArthur and arrest him after a fresh offence.

Dahmer confessed to murders

However, in other cases, it's almost a matter of luck that the serial killer is unveiled and arrested. On 22nd July 1991, two officers were patrolling the streets of Milwaukee in the US state of Wisconsin when a 32-year-old man with handcuffs hanging from one wrist, begged them to stop. Close to hysteria, he explained that a man had tried to kill him, and he directed the police to a nearby apartment. Here they were greeted by a man of the same age who introduced himself as Jeffrey Dahmer and invited them all inside.

The officers didn't think anything was amiss at first as they looked around the apartment. But then one of them opened the fridge and found a human head staring back at him. The formerly mild-mannered Dahmer was suddenly not so mild any more and tried to fight his way free, but eventually was handcuffed and arrested.

Police then conducted a thorough search of the apartment and made a number of gruesome finds. There were three more decapitated heads in the freezer, two skinned skulls on a kitchen shelf, a metal box in the bathroom filled with decomposing hands, a jar of male genitalia preserved in formalin in the kitchen, and a photo of one of his

unfortunate victims split open from the neck to the crotch.

Jeffrey Dahmer confessed to 15 murders. They were committed between 1978 and 1991, and were usually performed in particularly cruel ways. He described, for example, how he tried to turn his victims into zombies by drilling holes in their skulls and injecting hydrochloric acid or boiling water into their frontal lobes while they were still alive.

It was a clean confession — all the police had to do was identify the victims.

Fibres were vital clues

However, 11 years later, in the southern United States, the police didn't get off so lightly. A 15-year-old girl was watering flowers in a friend's front yard when a man in a car stopped. He threatened the girl with a gun, and forced her to crawl into a large plastic container on the back seat of the car. The assailant gagged her with paper towels and drove her back to his home, where she was raped for hours.

In the evening, he tied the girl to his bed with ropes and put her in a pair of blue, fur-lined handcuffs, which he'd bought in a sex shop. Then he lay down to sleep next to her. Once the rapist had fallen asleep, the young teenager managed to untie the knots and escape, still wearing the handcuffs. These manacles would later play a central role in the revelation of a triple mass murderer.

The girl alerted the police and was able to set them on the trail of her assailant. It turned out to be 38-year-old Richard Evonitz. Officers went to his apartment, but he'd woken up and taken flight before they arrived.

Three days later, he was recognised in Florida, and when police surrounded him after a high-speed car chase, he shot himself. But the police were not about to close the case. They wanted to know whether Evonitz could be linked to previous unsolved aggravated rapes

and murder cases. The police were particularly interested in three similar cases from 1996–1997, in which teenage girls had been abducted from their front yards. After a few days or weeks, the girls' bodies had been found in streams and lakes, each bearing clear signs of rape.

These three killings had already been the subject of intense investigation. Police had followed up on more than 12,000 leads from the public, DNA samples from the crime scenes had been run through police databases, and over 10,000 pieces of evidence had been examined and compared with those from 45,000 other unsolved cases.

Unfortunately, all this work hadn't brought the investigators any closer to the culprit. But, finally, a breakthrough occurred when they used a microscope to study a blue, synthetic fibre from the fur on the handcuffs that Evonitz had placed around the 15-year-old's wrist.

Clothes, blankets and other textiles are woven or knitted from threads, which in turn are spun from thin fibres. These fibres are typically about 0.02 millimetres thick and can be derived from both natural and synthetic

»»

Pizza crust bearing the suspect's DNA was conclusive evidence in one case.

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Pieces of the puzzle

Fibres from clothing can be important clues – or completely irrelevant.

Fibres from clothing, furniture and carpets can link the crime scene, killer and victim together, but they can also be random or so common that they contribute nothing. Clothing fibres must therefore be combined with other clues in the puzzle to reveal a killer.



Microscopic images of fibres can reveal the material and manufacturing process.

GETTY IMAGES



SHUTTERSTOCK

The more common the clothing the fibres come from, the less useful they are in identifying and convicting a suspect.

materials, such as wool, cotton, nylon or viscose.

Depending on the nature of the material and the way it is woven or spun, clothing and carpets lose some of these almost microscopic fibres, which in turn can stick to surfaces they come into contact with.

If a girl is abducted and driven to the assailant's home in his car, fibres from the seat cover may settle on her clothes, just as fibres can be transferred from the offender's clothes to the victim during a rape. Therefore, investigators collect fibres from crime scenes and the people involved. At large magnification under a microscope, one can determine

what material the fibres are made of, and their colour and thickness. One can also study the shape of the cross-sections of the fibres, or whether they bear signs of being made a certain way.

If police can establish that fibres found on the victim's clothing came from textiles in the culprit's car or from his own clothes, there is probably a link between the two people.

A puzzle of many pieces

Unfortunately, it can't be established for certain that a single small, blue cotton fibre on a victim's red dress originates from the suspect's blue jeans, even if the fibres are exactly the same. The

offender's jeans are, in fact, probably just one out of several thousand pairs made in a factory from the same fabric and containing exactly the same fibres, and which now sit on the legs of just as many other men. Therefore, it is up to investigators to find as many different clues as possible, all of which can link the culprit, victim and crime scene together. In the case of Richard Evonitz, they started with the blue fibres from the handcuffs around the 15-year-old girl's wrist. They soon discovered that identical fibres had been found five or six years earlier on the three girls who had been raped and killed.

But those weren't the only fibres that linked Evonitz to the old murder cases. Police investigators began meticulously collecting and studying fibres from the deceased rapist and his surroundings, and the work soon yielded results.

Fibres from the boot of Evonitz's car matched ones found on all three dead girls. And the same was true of fibres from two rugs, a bath mat and a bedspread in his home. There was no longer any doubt that all the girls had been in his car and home. Evonitz was a mass murderer, and he took his own life when surrounded by police shortly after his last failed murder attempt.

Fibres are far from the only forensic evidence that police can use in their

hunt for serial killers. Traditional fingerprints and DNA analysis also play a major role in investigations.

In one case, DNA analysis was even used in a rather contentious way to trap a serial killer.

DNA evidence required a match

Between 1985 and 2007, there had been 11 unsolved murders in the American city of Los Angeles, where police had succeeded in securing identical DNA evidence that suggested a common assailant. The problem, however, was that the genetic fingerprint of this DNA profile didn't match any of the profiles in police databases, so it was impossible to identify the suspect.

In 2010, the investigators decided to perform another type of search, one which doesn't look for a perfect match but rather for family members who share some, but not all, of the wanted individual's DNA. Using this so-called familial DNA analysis, investigators tracked down a young man, Christopher Franklin. He had been convicted of illegal possession of a weapon two years earlier and was therefore on the police DNA register.

However, Christopher Franklin was too young to have committed the first murders in the 1980s, so investigators instead turned their attention to his 57-year-old father, Lonnie Franklin. He was also known to the police and had previously served a sentence, but had mistakenly never been added to the DNA register.

Because familial DNA analysis is somewhat controversial, police were unable to confront Franklin and demand to take a DNA mouth swab to see if it matched the samples from the crime scenes.

The police therefore had to find another way to legally obtain his DNA. The solution was for a plain-clothes officer to follow Franklin into a Los Angeles restaurant. The suspect ordered pizza. Once he had finished, his plate was carried away by the officer who was disguised as a waiter. Franklin hadn't eaten the crusts of his pizza, which enabled the officer to take them to the station. In the abandoned food, where the suspect had bitten, there

were remnants of saliva, which forensic experts used to extract his DNA.

The subsequent DNA analysis showed a match for the samples from the 11 unsolved murders, but DNA was not the only forensic clue that identified Franklin as a serial killer. Several of the 11 murders, as well as a number of other unsolved murders from 1985 to 2007, were committed with shots from a 9-mm pistol. And police ballistics experts determined that the shots were fired from the same weapon.

Pistols make unique pattern

In the United States, since 1999, a national registry has been built

containing millions of detailed images of cartridge cases found at crime scenes, and they are recorded along with information about the crime and any knowledge of the weapon that fired the cartridges. The idea behind this ballistics database is that when a gun is fired, the weapon leaves marks on the cartridge that are as distinctive as a human fingerprint.

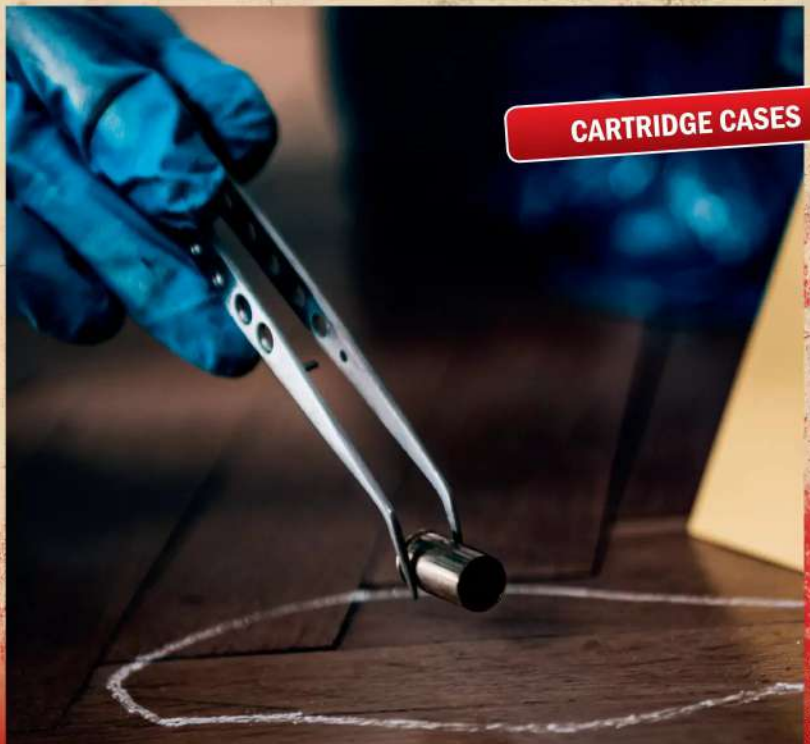
The marks occur when the trigger is pulled and the firing pin strikes the bottom of the cartridge where the percussion cap is located. The blow ignites the gunpowder and fires the projectile. On any weapon, small irregularities in the firing pin leave »

Cartridges have signature

Marks on cartridge cases can be analysed using images with a resolution as high as 54 billion pixels.

Police carefully collect all cartridge cases at a crime scene. Forensics experts can then use a device called an interferometer to perform very precise ballistic analysis of evidence on the cartridge

cases. The interferometer produces three-dimensional, 54-billion-pixel images that are so detailed that they can be compared with other cartridges from anywhere in the US using a national database.



A cartridge case at the scene of a crime can be linked to the weapon that fired it.

Fingerprints are still No 1

DNA evidence is gaining ground, but fingerprints are still the police's most popular means of identification.

All fingerprints are unique, and without gloves, most people leave invisible prints, which are transmitted by oils in the skin. An exception is bricklayers, for example, who can wear their fingertips smooth. Fingerprints are therefore

reliable evidence that can link an object or place to a suspect, and the method is still the most widely used way to solve crimes. The system of identifying criminal fingerprints was invented as early as the 1880s, but has since been refined.

GETTY IMAGES

FINGERPRINTS

Lines on the skin create patterns on fingertips; no two are alike.

characteristic marks on the bottom of the cartridge case. When the recoil then sends the empty cartridge case back towards the base, that also leaves completely unique imprints on the bottom of the cartridge case. And when the cartridge case is finally ejected, it scrapes against small bumps in the metal of the weapon, leaving a specific pattern of scratches.

Each weapon always leaves its own distinctive marks, imprints and scratches on the empty cartridge case. When the police find cartridge cases with exactly the same marks at several

different crime scenes, they can link the crimes together and establish that they have been committed with the same weapon. And if police later arrest a suspect with a weapon on them, they can test-fire a cartridge and study the marks on the cartridge case. If those marks correspond to those found on cartridges from other crime scenes, the police have most likely identified the weapon used for the crimes.

Hiatus or even more murders?

When police arrested Franklin in 2010 on the basis of DNA analysis, they

searched his home and found a semi-automatic 9-mm pistol. During the police test-firing, the gun turned out to leave exactly the same marks as had been found on cartridges connected to some of the unsolved murders.

The forensic evidence played a crucial role in 2016 when the court sentenced Lonnie Franklin to death for the murders of nine women and a teenage girl. During the lengthy investigation, he was given the sobriquet The Grim Sleeper, because he seemed to take a 14-year break between killings, from 1988 to 2002. But many believe that he didn't pause at all, and suspect him of being behind as many as 25 murders.

Serial killers always make the headlines, and some serial killers enjoy the attention they get, as evidenced by the fact that they sometimes make contact with the media to talk, or even brag, about their crimes. In some cases, police have taken advantage of this craving for public attention to catch such serial killers.

Police tricked killer into mistake

The desire for attention and fame was one of the hallmarks in the case of the BTK Killer, who brutally murdered ten people around the city of Wichita in Kansas, USA between 1974 and 1991.

He strangled his victims with his bare hands or by using ropes, belts, plastic bags or nylon stockings, and after several of the murders, sent messages to the press and police, taking responsibility for the crimes. He also came up with his own nickname – BTK – which he claimed stood for bind, torture, kill.

After 1991, both the murders and the press briefings stopped, and the police were unable to proceed with their investigation. But in 2004, BTK returned to the limelight. In a letter to a local newspaper signed Bill Thomas Killman, he confessed to a murder in 1986 that he had not previously been suspected of, and attached photos from the crime scene as evidence of his guilt.

Two months later, the local TV station received a similar letter, and

shortly after, the police decided they could use the correspondence to their advantage.

They started sending open letters to the BTK Killer and began a dialogue with him. The hope was that at some point he would become too enthusiastic, say too much and reveal his identity. The strategy succeeded, because in February 2005, BTK sent a floppy disk containing various messages to the TV station. However, the serial killer had made a foolish error, because police forensics experts were able to recover data on the disk

from a deleted *Microsoft Word* document. The metadata of the file showed that it was last edited by someone called “Dennis”, and there was some sort of link to the local church.

Only 13% of all serial killers today murder more than five victims before being caught.

Police soon discovered that one of the church’s employees was called Dennis Rader. After that, it wasn’t long before officers could make their move and arrest a 60-year-old – who consequently confessed to all ten murders.

Over the years, police have become increasingly adept at finding patterns in murder cases. Now they are able to pursue a serial killer as soon as they

spot a common thread, rather than having to investigate every single case of homicide separately.

Together with innovative and increasingly refined forensic analysis, new methods have led to just 13 percent of all serial killers being at liberty long enough to kill five or more people before being apprehended. Forty years ago, almost every third serial killer avoided detection. And because murderers are now being caught faster than before, it also means that the number of serial killers has dropped by 85 percent over the past three decades. Hopefully, over time, police investigative methods will improve further, so that no one needs to fear becoming the victim of a serial killer. ■

A killer’s boasting can trap him

Some serial killers seem to enjoy teasing the police with letters and write to the media to brag about their deeds and spread fear.

Serial killers such as BTK, Zodiac and Son of Sam tormented law enforcement officers with letters and wrote to the press boasting of their crimes. BTK’s bragging led to

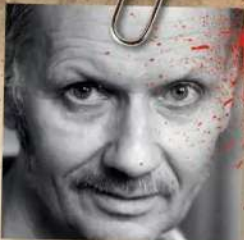
his arrest. On the other hand, the Zodiac wrote letters to the press for over 30 years with cryptograms he claimed could reveal his identity. Code experts cracked the ciphers,

but to no avail, and the killer’s identity is still unknown. Today, police can find hidden clues in both physical and digital messages that can be exploited in an investigation.

LETTERS TO POLICE



Letters from a killer can be the crucial clues that lead police to a suspect.



RITZAU SCANPIX

ANDREI CHIKAILO

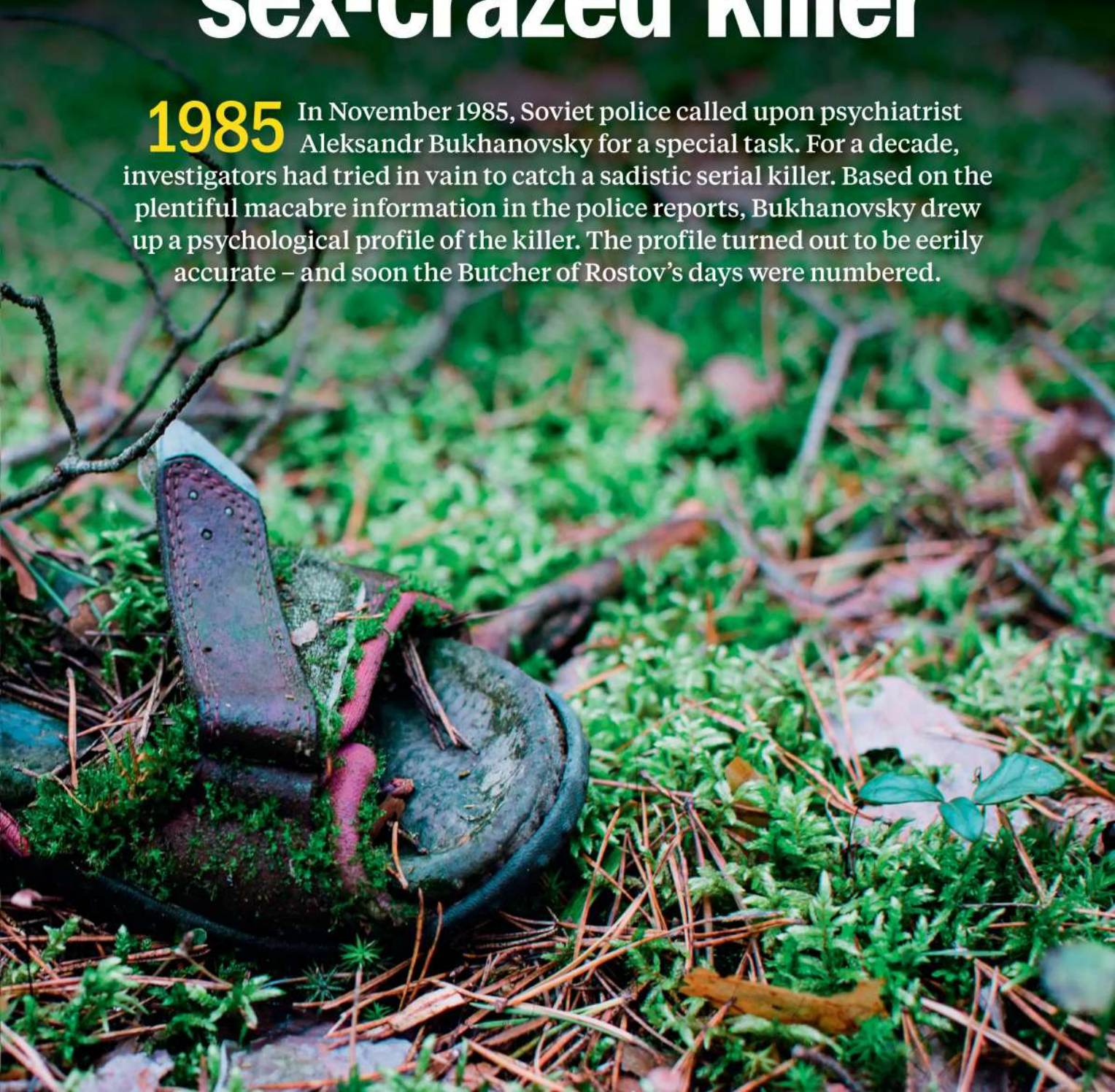
"Butcher of Rostov"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARKS:** Butchering bodies, mutilation, sexually motivated killings
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 53–56
- **MURDER METHOD:** Strangulation, stabbing
- **PLACE:** Rostov-on-Don, Russia
- **STATUS:** Executed with single gunshot on 14th February 1994

Impotence led to mutilation of children:

Profile caught sex-crazed killer

1985 In November 1985, Soviet police called upon psychiatrist Aleksandr Bukhanovsky for a special task. For a decade, investigators had tried in vain to catch a sadistic serial killer. Based on the plentiful macabre information in the police reports, Bukhanovsky drew up a psychological profile of the killer. The profile turned out to be eerily accurate – and soon the Butcher of Rostov's days were numbered.



Psychiatrist Aleksandr Bukhanovsky confidently strode down the prison corridor. Soon he would be meeting the prisoner for the first time, but he already knew him extremely well. In Bukhanovsky's folder was a 65-page profile of the killer, which the psychiatrist had prepared. Everything was described in intimate detail: the prisoner was impotent, a perverted sadist, middle-aged and living a double life as both a respectable citizen and a brutal killer. Only one piece of information was missing in the document: the name of the prisoner himself. The report was written before the identity of the killer was known. But thanks to Bukhanovsky's work, the criminal had nevertheless been apprehended. It is now well known that the worst serial killer in Russia's history was called Andrei Chikatilo.

The hunt for Andrei Chikatilo began on 27th June 1982. In a village, near the town of Rostov-on-Don, which was then in the Soviet Union, police found

the body of a 13-year-old girl, Lyubov Biryuk. Investigators could immediately see that it wasn't a typical murder case. The girl had been both struck on the head and stabbed a total of 22 times in the head, neck, chest and abdomen. The assaults were too deliberate for the perpetrator to have 'just' lashed out in drunkenness or rage. As a sadistic parting gift, the killer had even cut out the girl's eyes. There's a superstition that says the last thing you see before you die is burned into your retina. By cutting out her eyes, the killer had taken his macabre selfie.

Semen revealed blood type

The police didn't immediately have any evidence, but locals provided plenty of gossip. The murder was part of a ritual committed by a satanic cult, which sacrificed children to the powers of darkness. Lyubov had fallen into the hands of a gang of organ thieves, who wanted to sell her liver, kidneys and eyes on the black market. Or a group of boys from a local home for children

with mental health issues was behind it. However, none of the imaginative tips led to anything, and while police were wasting time investigating tittle-tattle, more corpses showed up.

By August 1982, the investigation was dealing with a total of six

“At the moment of cutting her and seeing the body cut open, I... ejaculated”

Chikatilo recalling the murder of a girl in 1981.

homicides. A serial killer was involved. All six victims – two boys and four girls – were between nine and 18 years old, and they had all been found in bushes near bus or train stations around Rostov. Their mouths had been filled with earth to stop their desperate cries. The killer had inflicted dozens of stab wounds on them and subsequently mutilated their corpses and removed organs from their bodies.

Despite the violence of the crimes, however, the killer had made little effort to hide his victims. Moreover, the police knew they were chasing a man. At most of the crime scenes, the police found semen. But in the time before DNA analysis, bodily fluids could only lead investigators to the offender's blood type – AB – which left the police with several thousand possible culprits.

Help summoned from Moscow

Apparently, there were no witnesses who had seen anything suspicious prior to the six murders, but in December, the police had a breakthrough: 10-year-old Olga Stalmachenok had boarded a bus to go home, but never arrived. Instead, she was found dead, with more than 50 stab wounds and her abdomen cut open. A middle-aged man had been seen gripping Olga's hand earlier, pulling her towards the forest, where her body was later discovered. The witness couldn't give more details, but now the police in the provincial

■ PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP

See inside killers' minds

After working with the Butcher of Rostov, Bukhanovsky tried to cure potential serial killers.

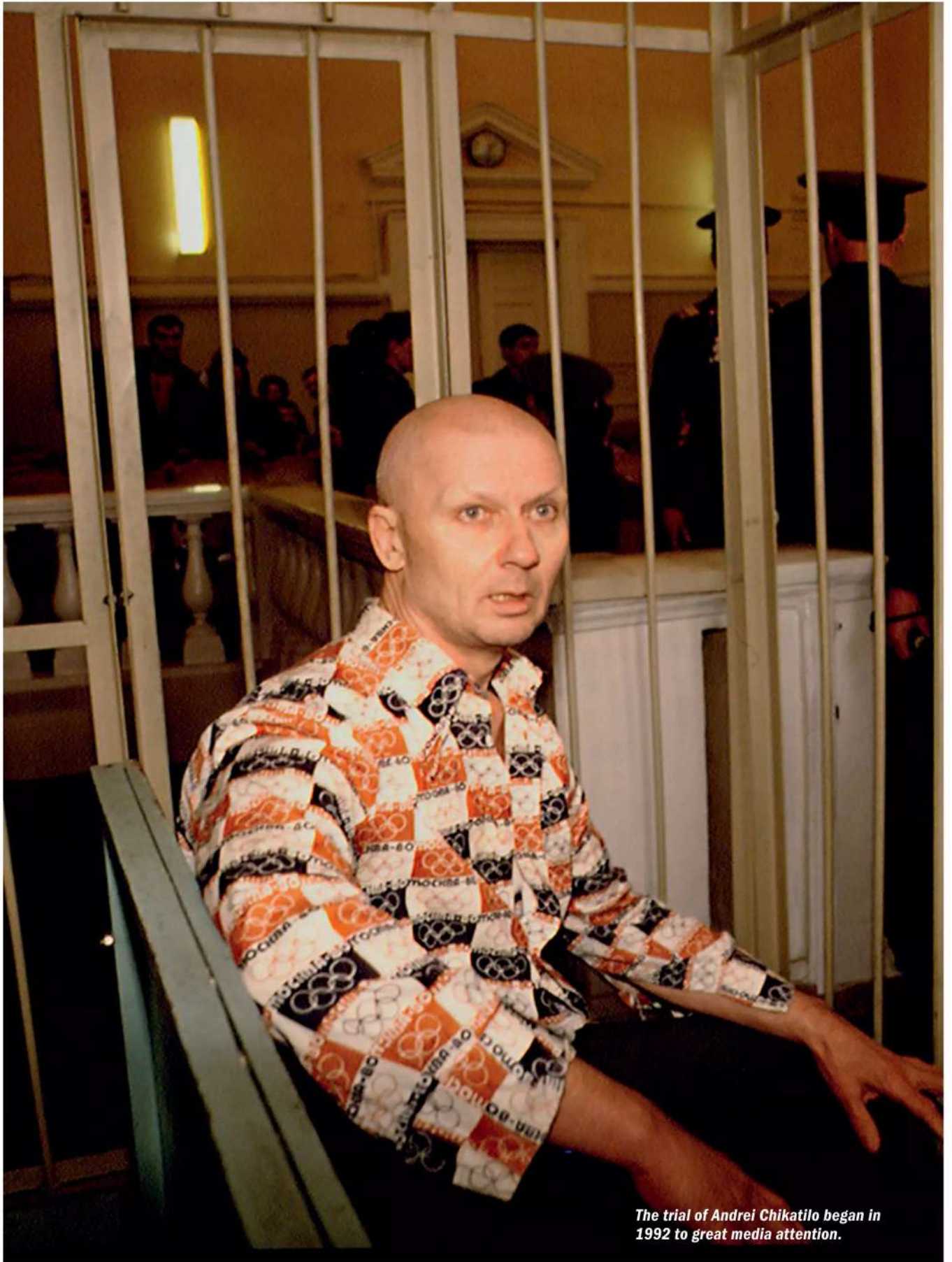
Police initially doubted the methods of psychiatrist Aleksandr Bukhanovsky, but the capture of Andrei Chikatilo changed everything. In new investigations into serial killings, the authorities began to draw regularly on the psychiatrist's knowledge.

Bukhanovsky developed a theory of serial killers based on his experience of the Chikatilo case. According to the psychiatrist, serial killers don't want to kill, but try – in vain – to combat the urge that slowly grows. To the indignation of many, Bukhanovsky has set up a private clinic, called Phoenix, where

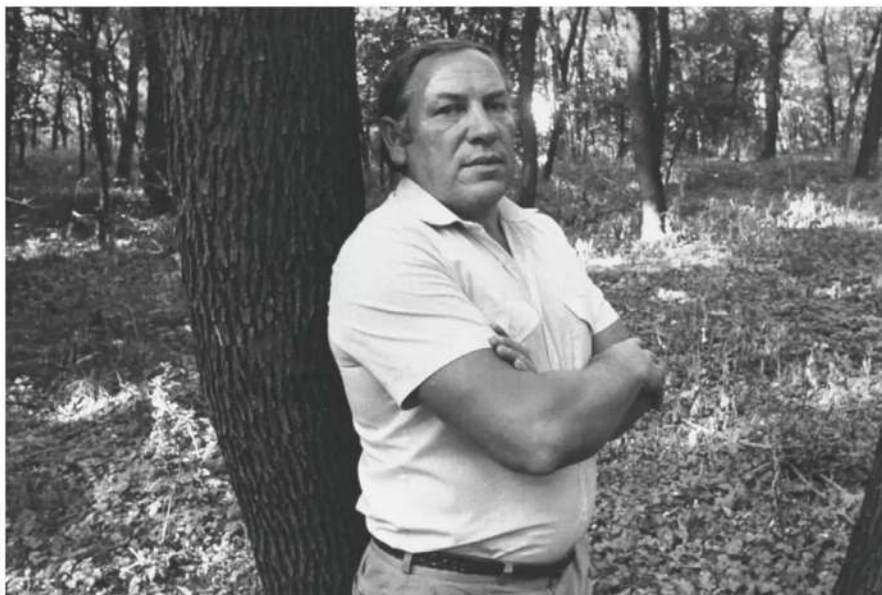
potential serial killers can receive preventative treatment. Several clients have committed assaults or murders, but the psychiatrist believes he can cure them.



Bukhanovsky became famous for his accurate psychological profile of Chikatilo.



The trial of Andrei Chikatilo began in 1992 to great media attention.



Forensic scientist Viktor Burakov was part of the special unit set up to catch the killer.

town had a real clue. A murderous maniac was at large, and there was no indication that his bloodlust was quenched. He had to be stopped as soon as possible, and this would require specialist murder investigators, so the local police contacted Moscow for help.

The authorities in Moscow sent experienced police commissioner Mikhail Fetisov and a team of ten investigators – including the well-known forensic scientist Viktor Burakov, who had found crucial evidence in hundreds of murder cases. The special unit was ready for the next murder, but nothing happened. For months, there were no new reports of killings and no fresh clues. Had the serial killer escaped? Or had he taken his own life? The answer came in June 1983, when the battered body of 15-year-old Laura Sarkisyan was found near a railway platform at Shakhty, 65 kilometres from Rostov. Over the coming months, the serial killer's list of victims grew to include five more children and young women. With little evidence to go on, Fetisov and his special unit instead began to compile a profile of the

murderer. Based on their experience, they assumed the killer was a paedophile, an outsider, probably previously admitted to a psychiatric hospital, with previous convictions. A middle-aged man with a strong sadistic urge is unlikely to have gone through life without having done something for which he's received a sentence.

Unexpected benefit

With the outline of a profile, the investigators began to search police archives and interrogate convicted sex offenders and homosexuals, who at that time were criminals by definition. Only men who had a bulletproof alibi for the time of every murder were eliminated from the list of suspects, and the hard line the police took resulted in a welcome side effect. As investigators dug into the criminal world, they found it full of informants and remorseful offenders. The police ended up investigating 95 murders, 140 violent assaults and 245 rapes as a result of the hunt for the serial killer.

For some suspects, the pressure was too great. Four people committed

suicide after being questioned by the special unit. However, the killer whom Fetisov's team really wanted to catch was proving impossible to track down, and he was still busy with his heinous crimes. As the police worked their way through their list of convicted sex offenders and the murders continued, it became clear that the killer's profile needed to be tweaked. Then the police had a break: when ten-year-old Dmitri Ptashnikov was went missing in Novoshakhtinsk, 40 kilometres from Rostov, witnesses reported seeing a man luring the boy away from a stamp kiosk. The witnesses gave a good description of the man, and when the police found the boy's abused body a few days later, they also discovered a footprint in the mud. With a blood type, description and footprint, they had a good chance of catching the killer.

The months passed and the murders continued under the noses of some of the Soviet Union's finest investigators. The list now numbered 23 deaths. Hundreds of police officers worked almost around the clock on Operation Forest Path, the code name for the hunt for the serial killer, and in September 1984, the strategy of letting plain-clothes officers wander around bus and train stations finally bore fruit. Two officers spotted a suspicious man at Rostov bus station. He was apparently trying to rub himself up against random single women, so the officers followed him. Was he just a sick simpleton? Or could he be the deranged killer? They decided to arrest him, and putting up no resistance, he went with them to the police station. He said his name was Andrei Chikatilo.

Chikatilo matched the serial killer's description, and when the police searched his bag, they found a long knife and some pieces of rope. Were they sitting there with the murderous maniac? The police took a blood sample from Chikatilo to see if his blood type matched the semen analysis, and while Chikatilo was in custody, they looked into his life history.

Killer escaped horror

Chikatilo was born in Ukraine in 1936. As a young man, he moved to Rostov,

“The whole thing – the cries, ... blood and ... agony – gave me relaxation and ... pleasure”

Andrei Chikatilo about his compulsion to kill.

where he took a university degree in Russian literature and linguistics. Since then, he'd taught Russian at several schools. He was married, had two children and was a member of the Communist Party. Nothing fitted the police profile of the killer. But Chikatilo had previously been a suspect in a murder case. In December 1978, the body of a nine-year-old, Yelena Zakotnova, was found not far from a cabin that Chikatilo had owned at the time – and exactly like the serial killer's other victims, Zakotnova had been seriously abused. Police found semen

on her, and witnesses had seen a man who looked like Chikatilo near the crime scene. Chikatilo had even had traces of blood on his clothes. Nevertheless, the police at the time had decided that the family man was not the offender. Instead, a former convicted sex offender, Aleksandr Kravchenko, confessed to the crime and was sentenced to death for the appalling murder.

The fact that Chikatilo was now a suspect in a similar case was apparently a coincidence. His blood type was A and thus didn't match the

blood type from the semen samples: type AB. Moreover, his wife, Feodosia, could testify that Andrei Chikatilo was at home on the day the serial killer was seen in Novoshakhtinsk. However, police discovered that a former employer had accused Chikatilo of theft, and after legal proceedings, the charge led to him receiving a short prison sentence. But three months after the arrest, Chikatilo was free again.

Whether Feodosia was protecting her husband or whether she really didn't know about his misdeeds is uncertain, but the alibi she provided »

■ CHIKATILO'S VICTIMS

Killer went after children

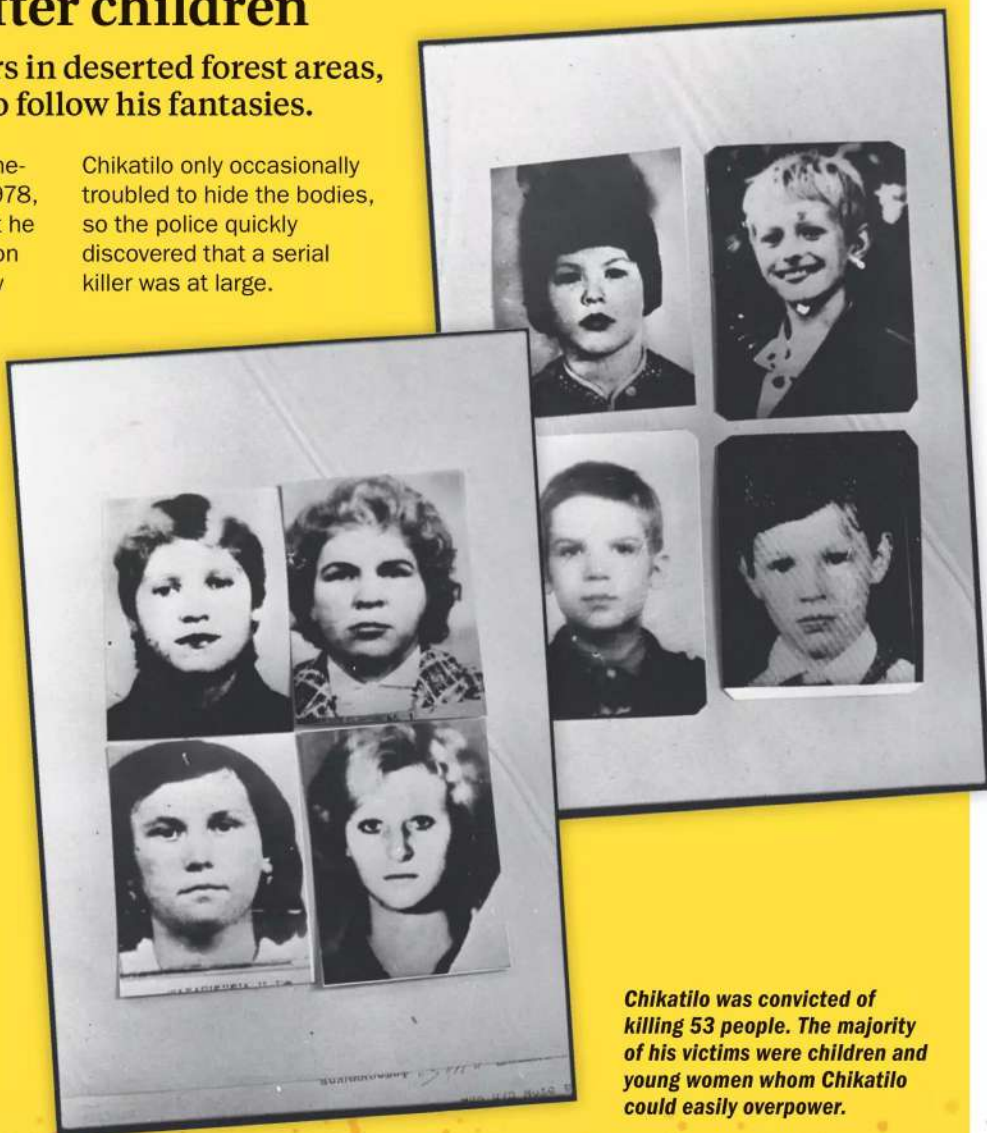
By isolating youngsters in deserted forest areas, the Butcher was free to follow his fantasies.

After his first murder, that of nine-year-old Yelena Zakotnova in 1978, Andrei Chikatilo discovered that he could achieve sexual gratification by killing. The Butcher of Rostov soon developed a system to ensure him access to fresh, innocent victims.

Chikatilo systematically sought out children and younger women standing alone at bus stops and train stations. The serial killer lured the children under various pretexts to nearby forest areas, where he could tie them up and stab them undisturbed. Subsequently, Chikatilo liked to cut their genitals, and he often removed their eyes. According to psychiatrist Aleksandr Bukhanovsky, Chikatilo used a knife for the killings because he was impotent – the weapon was his substitute for an erect penis.

The young women Chikatilo chose were often prostitutes. He tried to have sex with them but unable to perform, he stabbed them in a frenzy of frustration at his impotence.

Chikatilo only occasionally troubled to hide the bodies, so the police quickly discovered that a serial killer was at large.



Chikatilo was convicted of killing 53 people. The majority of his victims were children and young women whom Chikatilo could easily overpower.

allowed Chikatilo to continue killing. With the same sadistic violence as before, he resumed the assaults after a few months' break in the summer of 1984. The police could only look on in despair as new victims of the Butcher of Rostov emerged.

Psychiatrist brought insights

The special unit decided to go back and start the investigation all over again. Every known sex offender and homosexual was questioned once

“In perverted sexual manifestations, I feel a certain rage, out of control”

Chikatilo about his abhorrent assaults.

more. Fifteen lawyers and 30 investigators were given the sole task of capturing the Butcher of Rostov. Several young female officers in plain clothes were sent to roam bus and train stations in the hope of luring the killer. Forensic scientist Viktor Burakov, who was part of the special unit, also decided to involve another expert. For the first time in the hunt for a Soviet serial killer, a psychiatrist would be asked to compile a profile of the murderer.

The task fell to Dr Aleksandr Bukhanovsky from Rostov University. He was an expert in schizophrenia and transsexuality, and was at first somewhat reluctant – but when Burakov showed him pictures of the mutilated corpses, he accepted the task. Bukhanovsky himself had a 15-year-old daughter. He would, for all intents and purposes, be preventing her from becoming the next victim.

Although Bukhanovsky was highly respected in academic circles, he met with some opposition from the investigators, who found it difficult to

see how he could help them. But the police authorities had to try something new and gave Bukhanovsky complete access to all the materials in the case. The psychiatrist immediately began to study thousands of reports from crime scenes, transcripts of interrogations, and the ever-growing pile of autopsy reports. After just ten days, he was ready with his 65-page profile – and it instantly changed the direction of the police investigation.

The serial killer was not a previously convicted paedophile from the lowest strata of society, which had been the theory until then. In fact, according to Bukhanovsky, he was a 45 to 50-year-old well-educated man with no prior convictions, who had both a wife and children, but who'd suffered from a traumatic childhood and sexual dysfunction – probably impotence. Since he was young, impotence had caused the killer much shame, and only when he had total power and killed another human being was he able to achieve sexual gratification. For the killer, the assaults were a substitute for sex, and the knife was a substitute for his impotent penis as he repeatedly drove it into the victim. The gender, age and appearance of the victim were irrelevant to the offender. He only chose children and younger women because he was then reasonably sure of being physically superior. As most murders had taken place on weekdays within a radius of 50–60 km from Rostov – and always near transport hubs – Bukhanovsky also believed that the killer's job involved travelling.

36 murders were known to the police when they arrested Chikatilo. He admitted to another 20.

Police used decoys

The special unit accepted the psychiatrist's report and narrowed the search to only men who fitted Bukhanovsky's profile.

The news of the change of direction in the investigation as well as the psychological profiling reached the newspapers, and from that day on, the Butcher of Rostov stopped his attacks. Could the serial killer feel the net around him tightening? And had it made him completely give up his compulsion? Unlikely. Perhaps he'd

GETTY IMAGES



died. Or moved to another part of the country. After a few months without further murders, the special unit asked police districts across the country whether they'd found victims that had been mutilated in the same way as those of the Rostov killer, but no one had seen anything.

For more than three years, no new victims appeared, and the investigators continued to work using only their old evidence. But on 14th July 1989, police found Aleksandr Dyakonov. The boy was just eight years old when the killer lured him from a station in Rostov to



some bushes, where he sadistically cut Aleksandr's small body to pieces.

In the months that followed, all doubt disappeared that the Rostov killer had retired, moved or died, and the leader of the special unit, Mikhail Fetisov, felt increasing pressure to get results. Not only had the country's top detectives wasted tens of thousands of hours on the case without success, but with the increased freedom that head of state Mikhail Gorbachev had given to the country's state-run press, critical stories began to emerge. The public shouldn't be allowed to doubt the

authorities' ability to look after their safety, so police chiefs demanded results then and there. Fetisov realised that his time as head of the investigation was running out.

He threw everything at the case: commuter trains were equipped with hidden cameras, investigators reviewed all the case files over and over again to see if they'd overlooked anything, and a new strategy was tested in the field. At larger stations, more uniformed police were deployed to unnerve the offender. At smaller stations, though, uniformed officers were removed

Andrei Chikatilo led a double life for decades as a schoolteacher and a savage serial killer.

completely, and plain-clothes decoys were posted instead: slim female officers, who pretended to be weak and lonely. The hope was that the Butcher would be scared away from the main stations and throw himself on a 'random' victim at a small local station.

In November 1990, the mammoth police effort yielded a result – at first, without the police even realising it. On 6th November, a plain-clothes officer »»

at a railway station in the small town of Donleskhoz saw something suspicious.

A man came out of the woodland near the station and climbed up on to the platform. He was well dressed and certainly not kitted out for mushroom hunting, a popular pastime in the woods at that time of year. When the officer went up to the suspicious person and asked to see his papers, he noticed that the man had a fresh wound on one finger. It looked like the finger had been bitten and the nail torn off. However, his papers were in order and the officer saw no reason to detain the man.

Only when the serial killer's next victim, 22-year-old Svetlana Korostik, was found a week later in the woods by the station, did it dawn on the officer that he might have been face to face with the Butcher of Rostov. Fortunately, the officer had made a note of the suspect's name: Andrei Chikatilo.

Serial killer broke down

To find out whether Chikatilo really was the serial killer, the police began intense surveillance, while also digging into his past. They discovered that he'd been charged with sexual offences twice before. Conversations with principals at two schools where he'd previously worked reinforced their suspicions. The school heads both said that they'd forced Chikatilo to resign after cases of sexual abuse of students.

Chikatilo didn't realise that he was being watched. He drove around bus

and train stations, looking for his next victim. He was trying to make contact with women and children who were on their own, and on 20th November, the head of the investigation, Fetisov, decided that he'd seen enough. Chikatilo had to be apprehended.

Four plain-clothes officers arrested Chikatilo, just as he was trying to lure a

“The court cannot fail to assign him the only punishment that he deserves”

Judge Akubzhanov during sentencing.

child towards him in a park near his home. Chikatilo denied any knowledge of the sadistic killings when he was interrogated at the station shortly afterwards. A doctor found that the wound on Chikatilo's finger stemmed from a human bite, and in Chikatilo's bag, police found both rope and a knife. They also realised that determining the killer's blood type based on the semen that had been found on the victims had misled the investigation for years.

Before DNA tests, blood type was determined by an antibody test on a blood sample. In most people, this test can also be performed with other

bodily fluids, such as semen or saliva, but in some people, the test gives an incorrect result if actual blood isn't tested. Chikatilo was one of those people, and even though his blood type was A, an antibody test of his semen incorrectly showed that his blood type was AB. So, when semen samples in 1984 indicated that the murderer's blood type was AB, it was a mistake – one that caused the police to rule him out as a suspect and cost the lives of 20 innocent people when Chikatilo was allowed to go free and continue killing.

Fetisov didn't intend to repeat that mistake. He was convinced Chikatilo was the killer he'd been hunting, but the suspect denied everything. Then he called in psychiatrist Bukhanovsky.

When Bukhanovsky arrived at Chikatilo's cell, he met exactly whom he expected. The two chatted a little, then Bukhanovsky took his profile out of its folder and asked Chikatilo to read it. It only took a few minutes. Chikatilo broke down crying. “Yes, it's me,” the sadistic serial killer sobbed.

Hungry and weak child

In the following weeks, Chikatilo confessed to Bukhanovsky – not just the 36 murders known to the police, but a total of 56 murders he had committed since 1978. However, the killer believed he was innocent. It was society that had killed – he was merely the instrument.

The killer elaborated on his defence: Chikatilo was born in extreme poverty

PARK OF AVIATORS



in Ukraine. Stalin's collectivisation of agriculture had led to famine, and as a child Andrei Chikatilo was often reduced to eating grass and leaves. His mother beat him regularly and told him that an older brother he'd never known had been abducted and eaten by hungry neighbours. During World War II, Chikatilo witnessed murders and rapes, and in the years that followed, the situation barely improved.

At school, teachers perceived Chikatilo as a good student because he liked to read and had a good memory, but the other children teased and beat him because he was thin and weak – sometimes so weak that he fainted in class. Chikatilo's low self-esteem suffered another setback in his teens when he found out he suffered from chronic impotence. While other boys started dating girls, the already shy Chikatilo retreated even further from the world.

As a 17-year-old, he experienced sexual gratification for the first time – not in a loving relationship, but when he threw himself in anger at an 11-year-old girl. As he lay on top of her and she struggled to breathe, he ejaculated. He threatened her not to tell, but remembered the assault with pleasure.

After primary school and military service, Chikatilo moved away from his bad childhood memories in Ukraine and trained as a teacher in Russia. There he met Feodosia, whom he

married, and despite his impotence, had two children with her. But not everything was so conventional. Chikatilo couldn't keep his hands off the children he taught, and time and time again he had to seek a new job when his violations were discovered. But no one thought of reporting him, and so Chikatilo continued.

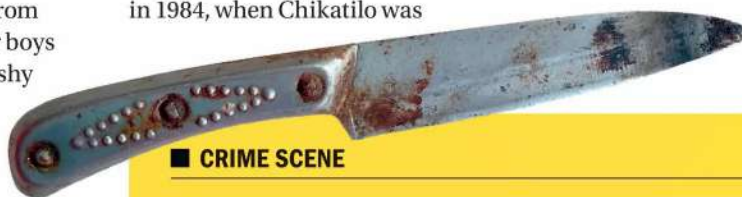
Sentenced to death

In 1978, Chikatilo committed his first murder. He now admitted to Bukhanovsky that he was the killer of nine-year-old Yelena Zakotnova, whose death he was arrested for at the time – the murder for which Aleksandr Kravchenko was executed. He also admitted to being behind the killing in 1984, when Chikatilo was

saved by his wife's testimony. But he maintained that all his crimes were society's fault. As the months passed, the prosecution discovered that Chikatilo was responsible for 53 murders, and in April 1992, his trial began. The case got a lot of media attention, and newspapers, radio and TV reported Chikatilo's atrocities in detail. His defence failed, and after a chaotic trial in which relatives of those killed threatened him from the gallery, Chikatilo was sentenced to death.

On 14th February, the story of the Butcher of Rostov ended. Chikatilo escaped having to endure the horrors to which he'd subjected his victims, and was executed with a single gunshot. ■

Chikatilo killed and mutilated his many victims with a knife.



■ CRIME SCENE

Sleepy park was murder hub

Rostov-on-Don is known for having had many serial killers. Chikatilo liked to kill in its deserted parks.



GETTY IMAGES AND SHUTTERSTOCK

The million-strong city of Rostov-on-Don differs little from other Russian cities, but has nevertheless become known as the serial killer capital of the world. During a ten-year period after Chikatilo's execution, up to 30 other serial killers, with nicknames such as "Konstantin the Barbarian" and "The Beast of Taganrog", terrorised the city. Andrei Chikatilo preferred

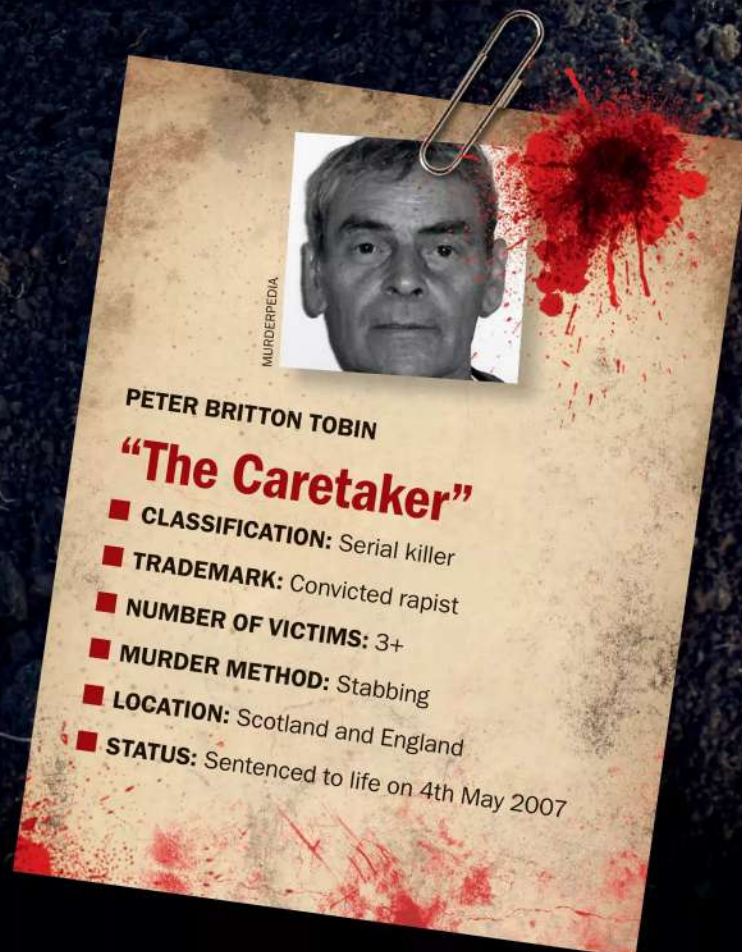
Two of his victims were found in the Kiziterinka River in the Park of Aviators.

to commit his murders in Rostov's parks, especially in the so-called Park of Aviators, at the eastern end of the city. Here, the serial killer could mutilate his victims in peace. The park is only sparsely lit and frequented on weekends by about 1,000 visitors on average.



Buried corpses in his own backyard: Handyman murdered for decades

2006 On 29th September 2006, police found the mutilated body of a young woman under the floorboards of St Patrick's Church in Glasgow. The discovery was the result of one of the most sadistic crimes in British history. The body was treated with such cruel brutality that police felt sure that whoever had taken the woman's life was a driven serial killer.



When the volunteers at St Patrick's Church in Glasgow showed up to open the soup kitchen on Sunday 24th September 2006, Pat McLaughlin had already set up the tables and chairs. The 60-year-old man had only worked as a volunteer for six weeks, but was already one of the most well-liked staff members at the church, which was surrounded by grey multi-storey buildings in the Anderston region of the city.

McLaughlin was charming, polite and helpful to staff and visitors, and had become known as a handyman around the church. Therefore, no one found it unusual that he also decided to help out in preparing the kitchen.

On the other hand, it was surprising that Angelika Kluk didn't show up. The 23-year-old Pole worked as a cleaner in the building while staying in one of the church's small rooms free of charge. In her home country, she studied Scandinavian at university in the city of Gdansk, but she spent most of her holidays in Glasgow, where her older sister lived, and where there were good opportunities to earn extra money to supplement her student finances.

Angelika Kluk had been associated with the church since the summer of 2005 and had become a well-liked and active member. It was very unlike her to

“There is every chance he will emerge as one of the nation's worst serial killers”

Senior criminal investigator
Malcolm Graham on Peter Tobin.

be absent during events like this – especially without letting anyone know.

The last to see Angelika Kluk was Pat McLaughlin. Earlier in the day, she had helped him paint a shed. The two often worked together to maintain the church's buildings, and the way McLaughlin referred to her as “my wee



In 2006, police found Angelika Kluk's body under St Patrick's Church in Glasgow.

apprentice” had even become something of an in-joke. What Angelika Kluk had done after her last brush stroke, however, was unknown. She was not in her room, and when she still didn't return the next morning, the staff decided to report her missing. When police came to question the church members about Angelika Kluk's disappearance, they spoke to Pat McLaughlin, the last person to have seen her. He calmly answered their questions, his face creased with appropriate concern. No one suspected the friendly, old man of having anything to do with her disappearance. But that would soon change.

Corpse buried under church

The day after Angelika was reported missing, Pat McLaughlin also vanished. The police were now no longer so convinced that the elderly churchgoer was as innocent as he had seemed, and on 28th September, an image of McLaughlin was circulated in the media.

It didn't take long before the police had their first break in the case. A former neighbour had seen the image and informed police that the suspect

was not called Pat McLaughlin, but Peter Tobin. Around the same time, police found a chair leg with blood stains during a search of the church.

A short time later, Angelika's trousers were discovered in a rubbish bin. They were covered with blood.

On the evening of 29th September, the investigators' worst suspicions were realised when they lifted the floorboards near the church's confessional box.

Angelika Kluk's mutilated corpse lay below. Her panties had been ripped off and there were clear signs of rape. Her hands were tied behind her back, and on her mouth was a piece of tape so tight that her whole face had been distorted. The skull was smashed and the battered body had been stabbed 16 times with a kitchen knife, which investigators quickly located.

Police immediately called a leading forensic scientist who, using chemical powder, found fingerprints and DNA evidence on the body.

The clues pointed to the man who had called himself Pat McLaughlin: Peter Tobin, a previously convicted sex offender whom the authorities had lost track of. The very next day, the trap snapped shut on Peter Tobin after he

40: the number of different aliases that authorities believe Tobin used over the years.

was spotted at the National Neurology and Neurosurgery Hospital in London, more than 600 kilometres south of Glasgow. Going by the name James Kelly, he had admitted himself to hospital with chest pains, but a nurse recognised him as the wanted killer and contacted the police. Shortly afterwards, Tobin was arrested in his bed on the ward.

Investigators quickly discovered that Peter Tobin had used more than 40 aliases over the years, and had moved countless times in his life to different UK locations – and in the last year alone he had owned almost 50 different phones and SIM cards. The case's lead investigator, David Swindle of the Strathclyde Police Department, was in no doubt that the suspect was behind several murders. Peter Tobin's advanced age and bestial methods suggested that this was not the first time he had killed.

Speaking of the day when Angelika Kluk was discovered, David Swindle later said, "I made up my mind that day that he was a serial killer ... we just had to prove it."

Cat with a mouse

Following the slaying of Angelika Kluk in 2006, the authorities launched a major investigation into Tobin's past. And it quickly turned out that the police already had considerable knowledge of his history.

As a young man, he had been imprisoned several times for petty crime, including theft. But he had also spent ten years in prison for a crime so grim that the prosecutor during the trial stated that Tobin treated his victims as "cruelly as a cat would treat a mouse".

The crime took place one summer day in 1993. 47-year-old Peter Tobin was in his flat in Leigh Park in Havant, Hampshire, with his six-year-old son, Daniel, when the doorbell rang. Two 14-year-old girls were standing outside. They had come to >>>

Peter Tobin probably murdered many undiscovered victims.

■ MORE WAITING TO BE FOUND

Tobin boasted of murders

The serial killer once claimed to have killed 48 women.

Peter Tobin was convicted of murdering three women, but the real number could be much higher. That's the opinion of David Swindle, chief investigator into the murder of Angelika Kluk, who was murdered and hidden beneath the floorboards of St Patrick's Church in 2006.

In 2019, Swindle said, "After Angelika Kluk's body was found, I formed the opinion that Tobin was a



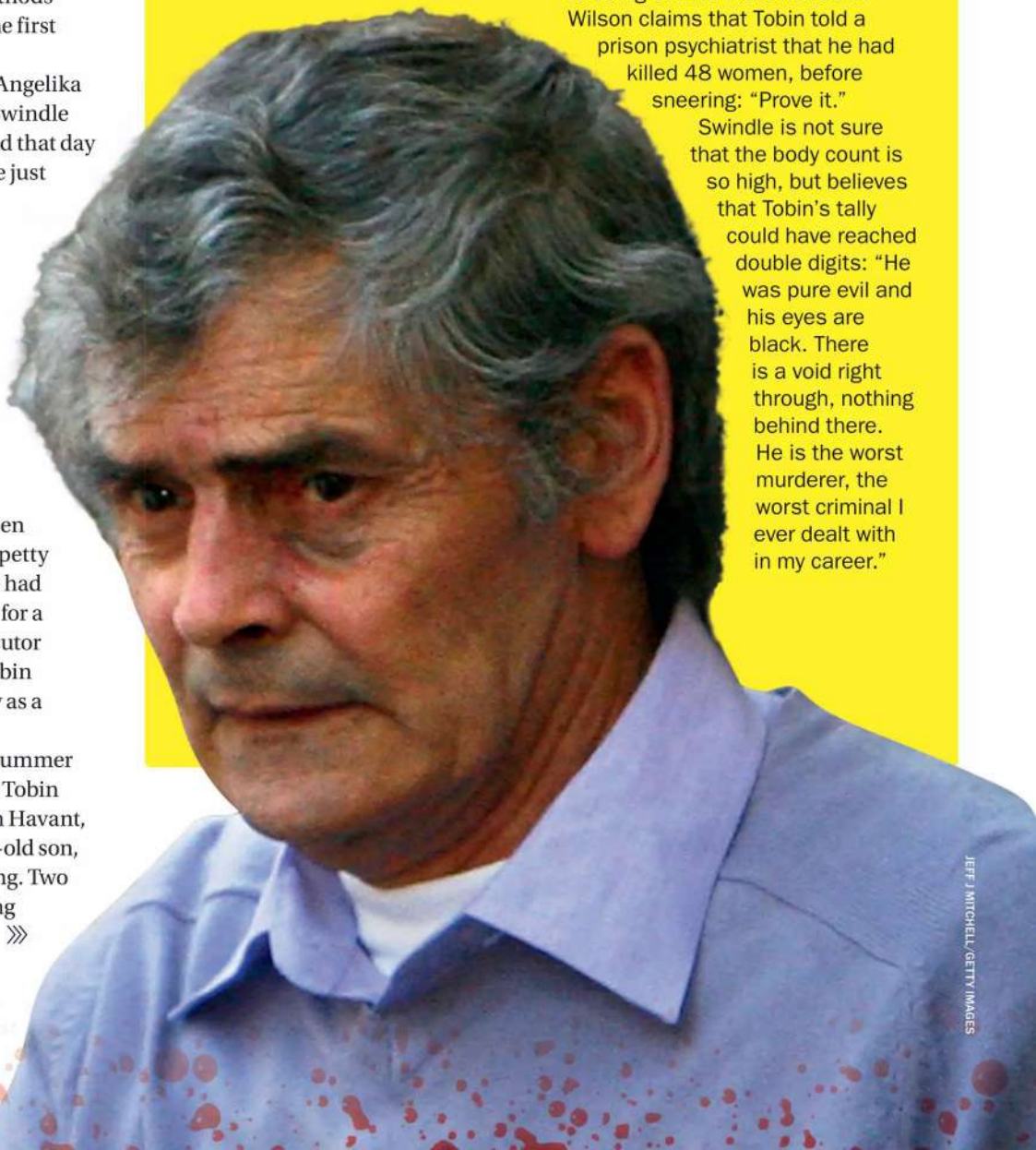
STRATHCLYDE POLICE

23-year-old student Angelika Kluk became Peter Tobin's last victim.

serial killer ... You don't get to 60 and kill for the first time."

According to criminologist David Wilson's 2010 book, *The Lost British Serial Killer*, Tobin admitted to being behind more murders. Wilson claims that Tobin told a prison psychiatrist that he had killed 48 women, before sneering: "Prove it."

Swindle is not sure that the body count is so high, but believes that Tobin's tally could have reached double digits: "He was pure evil and his eyes are black. There is a void right through, nothing behind there. He is the worst murderer, the worst criminal I ever dealt with in my career."



JEFF MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES

visit their friend, who lived in one of the neighbouring flats, but as she wasn't home yet, they needed a place to wait. It wasn't the first time they had chosen to wait with their friend's neighbour. Tobin, who on first impression seemed kind and charming, invited the two young girls to stay with him for as long as they needed. He even suggested that they could play with his little boy while they waited.

It didn't take long, however, before their stay took an unpleasant turn. Shortly after the girls entered the flat, Peter Tobin drew a knife and forced the two frightened teens to drink a strong mixture of cider and vodka, which he'd spiked with blue amitriptyline pills – an antidepressant with an anaesthetic effect.

When one of the girls woke up at 06.00 the next morning, Tobin was gone. Her ankles and wrists were bound, and her jeans lay elsewhere in the room. Her friend was unconscious. She screamed desperately at the top of her lungs. Neighbours heard her and called the police. When they arrived at the flat, they saw that one of the girls had been stabbed with a knife and the other raped. The gas fire was switched to maximum but had been left unlit, presumably in the hope that the girls would die. Miraculously, they both survived.

Peter Tobin, on the other hand, had disappeared without a trace. Police launched a massive search, which lasted 40 days. It was only after his image was broadcast on the BBC's

Crimewatch programme that he was recognised by members of an evangelical Christian sect called The Jesus Fellowship in Coventry, more than 300 km north of Leigh Park.

Tobin had sought refuge with the group under the pseudonym Peter Wilson; he had thought it was the perfect hiding place – until he was caught. On 18th May 1994, Peter Tobin was sentenced to 14 years in prison at Winchester Crown Court. At the time, the British authorities believed they had caught and imprisoned a sex offender. They had no idea they were dealing with a far more dangerous man.

First impressions

In the late 1960s, The Barrowland Ballroom was one of the most popular nightclubs in Glasgow. It was a place where young men and women swung their hips to the sounds of the day while looking for a partner. One of the club's regular clients was Tobin, who at that time was in his early 20s. During the day he worked as a chef at a boarding house in the city, but at the weekends he could always be found on the dance floor at The Barrowland Ballroom.

Tobin was an intellectual, handsome and well-dressed man, who had no trouble striking up conversations with young women. One of those captivated by the good-looking man on the dance floor was 17-year-old clerk and typist Margaret Louise Mountney. In 1969, the two began dating. Tobin, then 22, took Margaret dancing every Saturday night and, playing the gentleman, always drove her home afterwards. On other occasions, he took her on long trips to the Highlands around Loch Lomond. Soon he invited her home to meet his parents. The couple were married that same year, and moved into their new flat in east Glasgow. Tobin bought a black Labrador puppy for his young wife, who christened the dog Bute.

Margaret was entirely taken in by Tobin. She had no idea of the dark

1,400 old cases were reopened during Operation Anagram in an attempt to link more victims to Tobin.



nature hiding beneath his highly polished surface.

Tobin was born on 27th August 1946 in Johnstone, Renfrewshire, south-west of Glasgow. As the youngest of eight children, it quickly became clear that he was not like most kids of his age. Tobin was troublesome, with a wild streak his parents couldn't control. As a seven-year-old, he was sent to reform school, and by 1965 he was in Borstal.

Margaret had no idea about any of this when she moved in with her new husband four years later. But she soon discovered his vicious side.

One day, when Margaret started her period, he became furious and raped



Tobin drugged his victims with alcohol and blue pills that acted like an anaesthetic.

CAROLYN A. MCKEONE/SCIENCE SOURCE/IMAGESSELECT



PETER MACDIARMID/GETTY IMAGES & SHUTTERSTOCK

In 2007, forensic archaeologists assisted police in excavating the remains of Dinah McNicol and Vicky Hamilton in Peter Tobin's backyard.

her. From there, the violence escalated. Tobin beat and abused Margaret, and often kept her locked up in a room all day long. She was not allowed to go anywhere without him. On one occasion, she defied him and ventured out; when she returned, she found some boys playing football in the road with Bute's head. Tobin had punished her by decapitating the puppy and throwing its head out of the window.

On another occasion, Tobin attacked Margaret, raping her repeatedly before thrusting a knife up inside her, injuring her so badly that she was no longer able to have children. He left her on the floor, bleeding profusely. Luckily, her

downstairs neighbour came to her rescue when she saw blood dripping through the ceiling.

When Tobin was sentenced to a stretch in Barlinnie Prison in 1971 for burglary and forgery, Margaret took the chance to divorce him, freeing herself from his cruel violence. Sadly, it wasn't long before Tobin found a new victim. Shortly after his release in October 1972, Tobin met his next wife, 30-year-old nurse Sylvia Jeffries.

The pattern of the previous marriage was repeated, and soon Sylvia Jeffries found herself in a nightmare of horrific abuse, which included Tobin throttling her for sexual gratification. The couple

had both a son and a daughter, but the daughter died shortly after birth from breathing difficulties. It wasn't until 1976 that Sylvia and her son managed to escape her husband's brutal domestic abuse.

In 1989, Tobin was at a nightclub when he snared wife number three, 16-year-old Cathy Wilson. He was 24 years her senior and, on the surface, appeared to have led a quiet life for the past decade. Most of the time he had been working installing insulation panels in buildings around Scotland.

For Cathy Wilson, Tobin seemed to provide much-needed stability. She had suffered a harsh upbringing that »

Murdered girl speaks again

Vicky Hamilton was murdered in 1991, but in 2012 a cassette tape brought the 15-year-old girl back to life.

"Rot in Hell!" shouted Michael Hamilton. It was May 2007 at Edinburgh High Court, and serial killer Peter Tobin had just been convicted of brutally murdering Hamilton's 15-year-old daughter, Vicky, in 1991 and burying her body in his backyard. For 16 years, Hamilton and his wife had been left to wonder what had happened to their daughter, but when police dug up the girl's bones at Tobin's property, the gruesome truth became clear.

"Peter Tobin didn't just take my daughter away, he took my life away ... he ruined it completely, I have lost everything," said Michael Hamilton.

In 2012, however, the grieving father was given the opportunity to hear his daughter's voice again as police returned all the evidence gathered from Vicky's room. Among the belongings were diaries, photos, letters and a cassette tape with a recording of his daughter's voice.

Vicky had recorded the tape while preparing for a biology exam. On the recording, she could be heard laughing and singing, while apparently dancing happily around her room. Her parents had never known of the tape's existence.

"I'm overjoyed – it's like having Vicky back in the room," said Hamilton on hearing his daughter's voice again for the first time in over 20 years.

Michael Hamilton had to wait 16 years before his daughter's body was found.

featured abuse and neglect, and she had seen her mother beaten many times. Now, she believed, she finally had a decent, sweet man in her life. The couple married in a Methodist church in Brighton, and in December 1987 they had a son, Daniel. That's when everything changed.

Like Margaret and Sylvia, Cathy had fallen for a man who seemed handsome and charming but who was in fact a violent, sadistic psychopath. He controlled her by threatening to kill their son if she left him.

In 1990, Cathy managed to escape the marriage. It may have saved her life. Just 11 months later, Tobin took his violence to a whole new level and began his career as a killer.

Police found body in the garden

On 10th February 1991, 15-year-old schoolgirl Vicky Hamilton sat on a bench waiting for the bus in Bathgate, West Lothian, between Glasgow and Edinburgh. It was snowing heavily, so she was well wrapped in winter clothes.

Vicky had just visited her big sister, Sharon, in Livingston. It was the first time the young teenager had visited her sister alone, and now she was on her way home to Redding near Falkirk, in central Scotland.

She was halfway home, when she had to change buses to travel north. But she disappeared without a trace before her bus arrived.

The search for Vicky became one of the most extensive ever conducted in Britain. Police questioned 6,536 people and took more than 3,000 statements. But nothing helped trace the young schoolgirl. Then after 11 days, the police got their first break in the case. On 21st February, a man found Vicky Hamilton's purse while on his way to work. The purse was in a ditch between the city's train station and the bus stop.

A few weeks after police received the missing girl's purse, Tobin moved into his new house in the town of Margate, Kent, almost 800 kilometres from the scene of the crime in Scotland.

One of the first things the newcomer did was dig a huge hole in his backyard. A neighbour later recalled the event: "I looked over the fence one day and saw



JEFF J MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES & SHUTTERSTOCK



15-year-old Vicky Hamilton was murdered by Tobin in February 1991.



Dinah McNicol was Tobin's second victim in 1991. She was only 18 years old.

him digging this massive hole in the garden and I said what are you doing Pete? You going for Australia? And he said 'no', he said, 'I'm digging a sandpit for the lad when he comes up, somewhere for him to play.' And then about two days went by and it was all filled in and flattened off."

When the neighbour asked why, Tobin replied that social workers had forced him to refill the hole because it wasn't safe. What the neighbour and no one else knew for the next 16 years was that the hole hid the body of the missing schoolgirl, Vicky Hamilton. Tobin had kidnapped and murdered the young girl in Scotland, then taken the body

"I have heard no case more tragic, more terrible than this one"

Judge Menzies on the murder of Angelika Kluk.

with him to Margate and buried her in his new back garden. However, Vicky Hamilton's remains were not the only ones hiding under Peter Tobin's lawn.

On 5th August 1991, 18-year-old Dinah McNicol was on her way home to Essex from a music festival in Liphook, Hampshire, with a friend she had met at the festival. They had decided to

hitch-hike and were picked up by Peter Tobin. He was on his way home after visiting his son in Portsmouth.

Dinah's friend was dropped off near his home, leaving Dinah to continue the trip alone with Tobin. She was never seen alive again.

When Dinah failed to return home from the festival, her parents became worried and reported her missing. The police became involved. Ten days after Dinah had disappeared, officers discovered that her bank cards were being used to withdraw £250 per day from ATMs across towns along the south coast. Dinah McNicol had previously told both friends and family that she was keeping her savings to fund her education and to travel, so the withdrawals alarmed her family. And with good reason, it turned out: Dinah McNicol wasn't the one withdrawing the cash. She was already dead and buried next to Vicky Hamilton in Peter Tobin's back garden.

On the trail of a serial killer

None of this was known when 58-year-old Peter Tobin was released in 2004 after ten years in prison following the assaults on the teenage girls in 1993. Ironically, he had been let out four years early for good behaviour. However, the

authorities were still watching the convicted sex offender, and each time Peter Tobin moved, he had to register his new address.

It didn't take long, however, before they lost track of him. Ten months after his release, Peter Tobin travelled back to his native Scotland and entered the city of Paisley under a new name. The authorities issued a warrant for his arrest, but it didn't help uncover his hiding place.

In October 2005, he struck again. His victim this time was 24-year-old Cheryl McLachlan. She knew Peter Tobin through her ex-boyfriend, who had watched football matches with him. Cheryl McLachlan liked the older, friendly man, so when Tobin invited her to her to his home to watch television one evening, she said yes without hesitation. Not long after she arrived,

she discovered by chance that he had a belt and rope hidden next to his chair. When Cheryl McLachlan discreetly tried to leave his flat, he drew a knife and assaulted her.

Badly beaten, she eventually managed to escape and contact the police. But by the time officers arrived, Tobin had disappeared again – this time to St Patrick's Church in Glasgow.

900 seconds – that's how long it took the jury in 2007 to unanimously convict Peter Tobin for his third murder.

Driven by demons

It was there under the church floor, a few metres from the confessional box, that police found the body of the 23-year-old Pole Angelika Kluk in 2006. The forensic scientist who examined the body speculated that Angelika may well have been alive when she was pushed below the floorboards.

The trial against Peter Tobin at Edinburgh's High Court lasted six weeks and ended in May 2007. When it was over, Tobin was sentenced to 21 years in prison for the rape and murder of Angelika Kluk.

In connection with the sentencing, the judge, Lord Menzies, said: "In the course of my time in the law I have seen many bad men and I have heard evidence about many terrible crimes which have been committed but I >>>

have heard no case more tragic, more terrible than this one."

The nature of Angelika's death convinced the police that Peter Tobin must have committed similar crimes in the past. Under the leadership of Strathclyde Police Department's lead investigator, David Swindle, officers therefore began revisiting old, unsolved cases in hope of linking the victims to Tobin. The huge investigation that followed was named Operation Anagram.

The case of Vicky Hamilton, a schoolgirl who had gone missing in 1991, was of particular interest when officers discovered that Peter Tobin had lived just a few kilometres away from the area where Vicky had disappeared. In the decade and a half that had passed since her disappearance was first investigated in 1991, police forensic equipment had improved significantly. As part of Operation Anagram, technicians therefore re-examined the victim's purse, and this time they found traces of DNA that matched Tobin's son's. In November 2007, a thorough forensic investigation was conducted in Peter Tobin's old house. With the help of specialist equipment, including ground-penetrating radar, investigators soon found Vicky's skeleton in the back garden. Then, two days later, they

found the body of Dinah McNicol, whose body had been cut in half and placed in plastic bags. Forensic scientists later found traces of amitriptyline in both bodies – the same drug Tobin had used to anaesthetise the two teenage girls in his apartment in 1993.

The subsequent trials against Tobin were both over in no time, and the now-confirmed three-time killer was sentenced to life in prison.

In 2008, after the trial relating to the death of Vicky Hamilton, the head of the Lothian and Borders Police's criminal investigation department, Malcolm Graham, made the following statement: "Tobin is 62. He's had a long time to harm women. From what we know of him so far, he took every opportunity he could to satisfy the demons that drove him. There is every chance he will emerge as one of the nation's worst serial killers."

Killed many more

After finding the remains of the two bodies in Tobin's garden in 2007, the authorities scaled up the investigation. Police officers from all over the UK were drafted in to review almost 1,400 old cases as part of Operation Anagram, in the hope of linking some of the unsolved murders to Peter Tobin. It remains one of the largest criminal

investigations ever to have been carried out in the UK.

Among the many cases that police trawled through was that of 22-year-old Pamela Exall, who disappeared from a campsite in Norfolk in 1974. She was never found again, but the disappearance occurred at one of Tobin's favourite holiday destinations. And some of the countless pieces of jewellery the police found when they searched Tobin's flat resembled jewellery that Pamela had been wearing when she disappeared.

The cases that concerned the police the most, however, were the "Bible John" murders, which took place in the late 1960s. Over a 20-month period between 1968 and 1969, three young women were murdered in Glasgow. All three of the victims were last seen on Saturday nights at The Barrowland Ballroom, which at the time was Tobin's favourite nightclub.

The last of the three women killed, 29-year-old Helen Puttock, had visited The Barrowland Ballroom with her sister, Jean. When they were going home, they shared a taxi with a man they had met outside the club. Jean was dropped off in front of her house while

50,000 tips were received by police about "Bible John" who murdered three women in the late 1960s.



Investigators check the gardens around two of Tobin's houses with ground-penetrating radar.

her sister continued in the taxi with the stranger. That was the last time she was seen alive. Jean Puttock later told police that the man had introduced himself as John and had spoken of the Old Testament during their conversation. As a result, he was dubbed "Bible John" by the British press. 5,000 men were questioned and Scottish police received more than 50,000 tips. But the perpetrator was never caught.

Almost 40 years later, a number of experts became convinced that "Bible John" was in fact Peter Tobin. The suspicion was impossible to prove with DNA profiling, but the murders of the three women in the late 1960s bore striking similarities to Tobin's other assaults. The victims had all been strangled in their stockings, and all three were menstruating at the time of their murders, something that had triggered violent reactions in Tobin in the past whenever his ex-wives were on their periods.

Eyewitnesses at the time reported that the suspect was missing a tooth on the upper-right side. A dentist had removed the corresponding tooth from Tobin's mouth in the late 1960s. Tobin was also very familiar with the Bible, so much so that he was later able to hide in religious communities.

Operation Anagram wound down in June 2011. The police had failed to find solid evidence to connect more victims to Tobin, although the authorities announced that the investigation was,

■ STILL REFUSING TO SPEAK

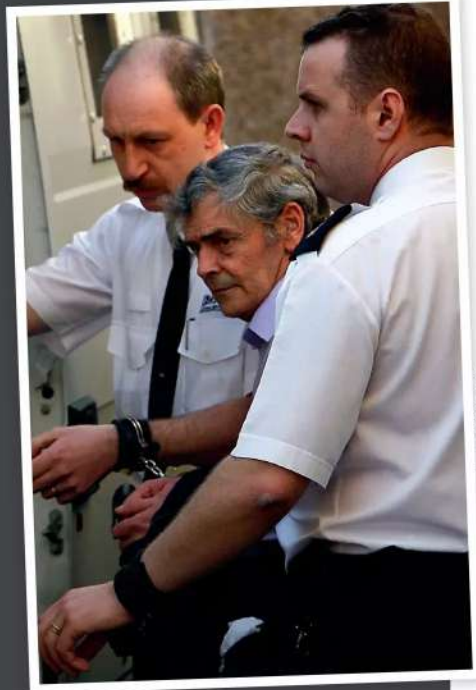
Serial killer "at death's door"

74-year-old Peter Tobin was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2019, but is fighting to stay alive.

Peter Tobin will die in prison. The only question is when. The 74-year-old prisoner has cheated death several times already. Over the years, he has been in and out of hospital with heart attacks, and in 2019 he was diagnosed with terminal cancer.

"At Christmas he was at death's door," a prison officer told the *Daily Record* newspaper. "Everyone expected him to be dead by now." The Scottish serial killer's health has reportedly improved since then, but even so, he is not expected to live much longer. He still refuses to speak about his victims. "He will never tell his secrets," a source at the prison claimed. "He's going to take them to the grave."

Tobin is serving three life sentences at Saughton Prison in Edinburgh.



JEFF MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES & SHUTTERSTOCK

officially, still ongoing. David Swindle, who led Operation Anagram, remains convinced that there's still plenty to uncover before we know the full, gruesome story of one of Britain's worst serial killers. In 2019, he claimed that,

in his opinion, if Peter Tobin had got away with the murder of Angelika Kluk, he would have moved on to a fresh victim and continued killing. "I always say he's definitely done other crimes. He has killed other people." ■



PETER MACDIARMID/GETTY IMAGES & SHUTTERSTOCK

POOL/REUTERS/RITZAU SCANPIX



GARY RIDGWAY

"Green River Killer"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARKS:** Rape, necrophilia
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 49+
- **MURDER METHOD:** Strangulation
- **LOCATION:** King County, Washington, USA
- **STATUS:** Convicted of a total of 49 life sentences across two trials (2003 and 2011)



Ridgway dumped strangled women in the river:

Serial killer hated prostitutes

2001 In 1982, a large number of women – mainly prostitutes – began to disappear in the Seattle area. Some were later found murdered in Green River. Nineteen years later, DNA analysis identified the fearsome perpetrator, leading to the arrest of vehicle spray painter, Gary Ridgway.

On 15th May 1982, 15-year-old Galen Hirschi had spent the late spring day cycling around with his friend Robert Anderson. The pair enjoyed speeding along random paths and side roads in Kent, a city south-west of Seattle in the north-west of the United States. When it was time to go home, the two boys decided to travel via the old iron bridge over the

Green River. The teenage friends halted on the bridge, but as Hirschi peered into the water, the current seemed to push a bag or sack against one of the bridge piers, and what appeared to be two white tennis shoes were poking out.

The teenagers were naturally curious. They decided to examine it more closely, and so gently waded out to

it. Galen wanted to pick up the bag, but as he bent over to do so, Robert shouted in horror for his friend to stop. Disturbed, Galen straightened up and looked. He had seen what Robert had spotted: long hair waving in the water, and a jacket wrapped around what must have been a head. Hirschi and Robert Anderson had not found a bag of shoes – they had discovered the body of a young woman.

The macabre find marked the start of a 19-year manhunt for one of history's most notorious murderers, the Green River Killer, a name that would become synonymous with fear in the US.

The police quickly reached the bridge at Meeker Street,

where they fished the body out. An autopsy revealed the woman in the river had been strangled. Investigators identified the deceased as

16-year-old Wendy Lee Coffield, who had worked as a prostitute along the Pacific Highway.

On this highway south of Seattle, there were plenty of gas stations, seedy cafeterias and motels that rented out rooms on an hourly basis.

It was a busy area, with long-distance drivers parking for the night, homeless people begging for a dime, drug dealers pushing their wares on passers-by, and young women offering themselves to suburban fathers or whoever else might come by. The influx of prostitutes was so massive that not even the pimps were in control of who came and went.

Angler's gruesome discovery

It's not uncommon for prostitutes to be killed by a disgruntled pimp, an angry customer, or even an overdose, and the police found the task too big, leaving them with nowhere to go in the hunt for Wendy Lee Coffield's killer. A month after she was discovered, an angler made another macabre discovery in the river near the main road. While fishing, he caught sight of what he thought was a mannequin in the murky waters of the Green River. Upon closer inspection, he discovered to his horror that the doll was in fact a dead woman.

Worse still, another corpse was also present, its hand swaying in the stream as though waving to the fisherman. The police immediately dispatched officers to investigate the area, where they found a third body on the riverbank. With four bodies, all found in Green River, the police realised they weren't simply dealing with a one-off murder.

That afternoon, they began the hunt for a serial killer. Detective Fae Brooks was given the role of primary investigator in the Green River Task Force. She'd grown up in the area, and

49 life sentences were handed down to Gary Ridgway, one for each murder that he'd confessed to.

In February 2011 – ten years after his arrest – the imprisoned Ridgway pleaded guilty to a 49th murder.

due to childhood abuse had come close to ending up as just another of the many prostitutes on the Pacific Highway. Instead, Brooks choose to pursue a career in law enforcement, and with strong contacts in the criminal underworld, she had the best possible intelligence to identify the killer before he took his next victim. But none of her usual sources seemed to know anything about the murders.

The pimps had heard nothing, and among the women on the street there were no rumours of customers who were more perverse, sadistic or unpleasant than usual.

Cab driver offered help

The serial killer had far greater success with his venture than Brooks and her task force. While several plain-clothes officers monitored the Pacific Highway, the killer continued to pick up and murder young prostitutes before dumping their bodies along Green River.

During the autumn, police found themselves investigating more than a dozen unsolved prostitute murders without a single vital clue. In an attempt to narrow down the hunt for the killer,

“It’s like an addiction ... like having a problem with alcohol. A guy can’t control it”

Gary Ridgway’s confession to his wife.

police consulted with experts to draw up a criminal profile. The profile stated that the killer was a lonely man who would probably make himself available to the investigation. In mid-September – two months after the discovery of the first body – local cab driver Melvyn

■ A FAMILY IN SHOCK AND GRIEF

Skull found after 22 years

In 2005, a hiker found the skull of one of the Green River Killer’s victims in the forest south-east of Seattle.



At 19.00 on 12th September 1983, 19-year-old Tracy Winston disappeared without a trace from the Northgate Mall south of Seattle. Twenty-two years later, in November 2005, a hiker discovered the young woman’s skull in woodland south-east of Seattle. Tracy was one of 48 women Ridgway had confessed to murdering during the 2003 trial. The teenager’s mother, Merti Winston, was present at the sentencing, where she showed a picture of her murdered daughter. In a newspaper interview, the mother said Ridgway had not only killed Tracy but also devastated an entire family forever.

Merti Winston displays a picture of her daughter during Ridgway’s trial.

Foster contacted the police. He said he’d known several of the murdered women casually and had even given some of them a lift. He wanted to assist with the investigation.

The investigators immediately became suspicious. Foster’s behaviour was so strange that he instantly found himself their prime suspect. But despite lengthy interrogations, the police could not find anything to link him to the murders. After Foster was released, it became apparent that he liked the attention that the local media gave him as officers shadowed him around the clock.

A journalist asked him if he’d killed the women, live on TV: “No, but I wish I did know who did,” Foster replied. Investigators began considering whether the perpetrator may have just served himself up on a silver platter in return for some small-screen attention. They intensified their surveillance of Foster, but after months of hard work,

Brooks and her colleagues were forced to admit that Foster, despite his strange behaviour, was not their serial killer. Three more bodies had emerged in the meantime and these women were killed while Foster was under the keen eye of the police.

Boyfriend discovers missing car

Over the winter, the murders came to a temporary halt, but in April 1983, police were contacted by Robert (Bobby) Woods, who was worried about his girlfriend, 18-year-old Marie M Malvar, a Filipino prostitute who worked the Pacific Highway route. Woods watched as his girlfriend got into a red pickup truck and drove away with a man, but he grew suspicious as they appeared to be arguing. He’d decided to follow the truck, but it vanished in traffic. When Malvar didn’t return the next day, he decided to call the police.

With the police appearing to do nothing Woods became desperate; >>>

■ RIDGWAY REVISITED THE DEAD

Killer buried his victims in “clusters”

Ridgway placed several of the bodies in groups, returning to them to relive the murders. During interrogation, he changed his explanation about the number of victims.

Following his sentencing in King County Superior Court, a weeping Gary Ridgway read out a statement:

“I’m sorry for killing all those young ladies. I’ve tried hard to remember as

much as I could, to help the detectives find and recover the ladies.”

The killer had named several of the places where he had hidden his victims. He also admitted to having

placed several of the corpses in clusters so that he could return to them: “I like to drive by the ‘clusters’ around the county and think about the women I placed there ... Sometimes I killed and dumped a woman intending to start a new ‘cluster’, and never returned because I thought I might get caught putting more women there.”

The court found Ridgway guilty of 49 murders. Forty-two of those killed had already appeared on the police list of possible victims of the Green River Killer. But during the initial interrogations, Ridgway often changed his story: one day he stated that he had 65 lives on his conscience, the next the number had grown to 71 or 90. Police still have no idea if more of his victims lay hidden in Green River.

Police bring one of Ridgway's victims ashore. He would dump several corpses in the same place.



D. HAMAMURA/ZUMA/RITZAU SCANPIX

he decided to drive around the area to find the truck that Marie had got into. Woods found it parked in front of a small house in the suburb of Des Moines, not far from where she'd been picked up on that fateful night. He wasted no time in calling the police to report his discovery.

Local police dispatched an officer to the address, but the officer in question knew the man who lived in the house extremely well: Gary Ridgway was an old school friend. A red pickup was parked in the driveway. The officer chatted with Ridgway and then asked him if he knew anything about the missing Filipino woman. Ridgway claimed to know nothing, so the officer departed empty handed.

Ridgway subsequently provided a saliva sample, but it wasn't submitted for DNA analysis due to a lack of confidence in the technology providing

accurate results. No further action was taken, and Marie Malvar became just another statistic.

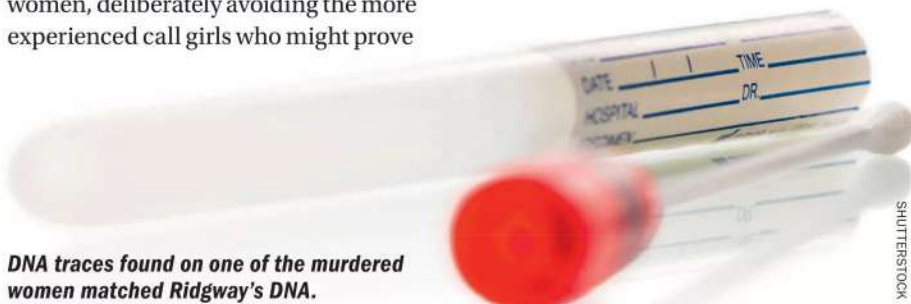
Fear lurked

Over the summer of 1983, the number of prostitutes reported murdered or missing came to 26. All were young women who had only been working in the dangerous environment for a short period. The killer appeared to know the Pacific Highway well and only exposed himself to the most vulnerable women, deliberately avoiding the more experienced call girls who might prove

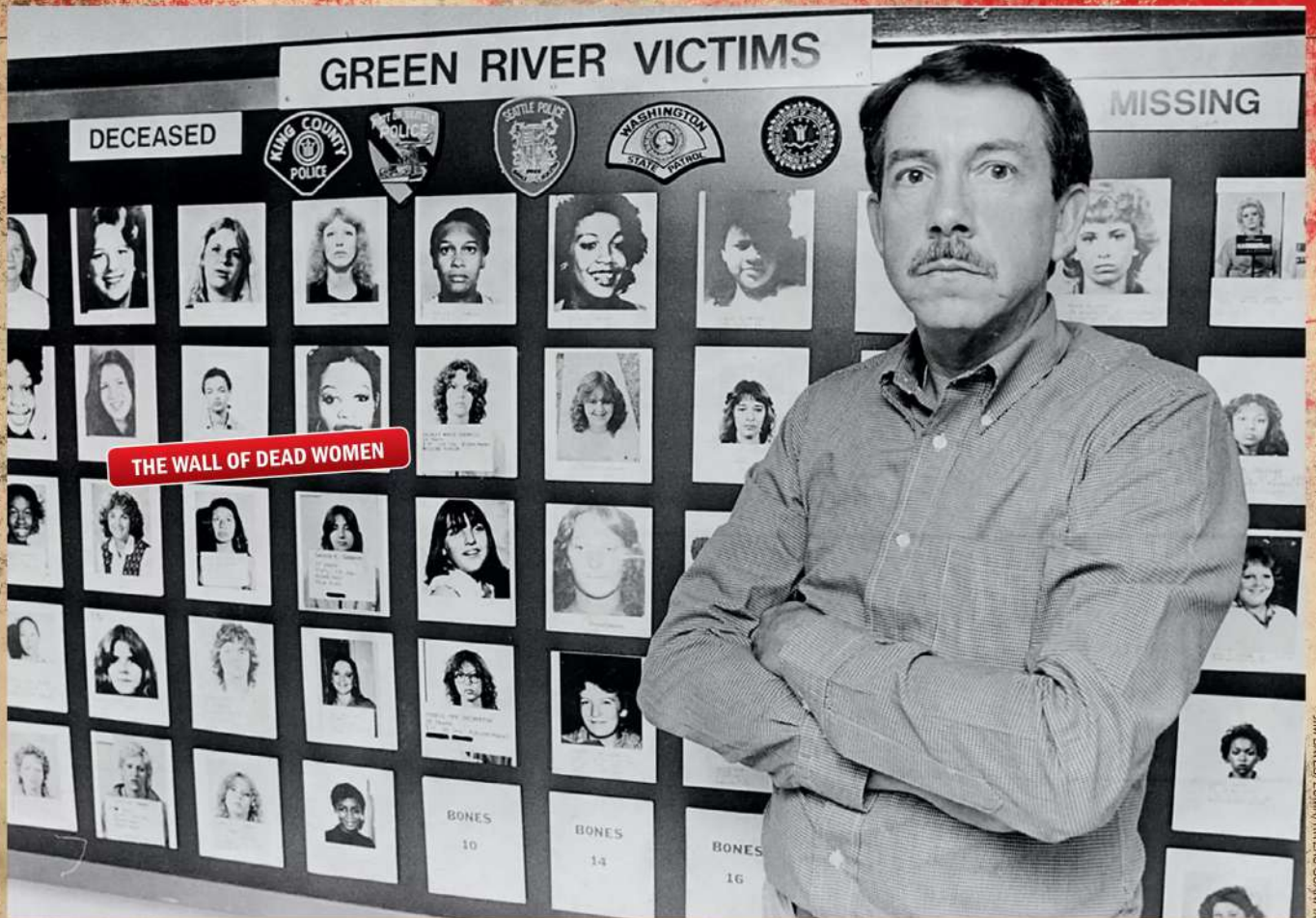
more capable of dealing with a dangerous customer.

Both young and experienced prostitutes feared for their lives. Together they questioned why police couldn't find the killer. Rumours began to spread that it was a police officer, and that his colleagues were covering it up. Their anxiety grew daily with good reason. By the spring of 1984, the list of victims totalled 40 women. But then, the killings abruptly stopped. Police knew from experience that only two

DNA traces found on one of the murdered women matched Ridgway's DNA.



SHUTTERSTOCK



JIM BATES/ZUMA/RITZAU-SCAMPX

The number of killed and missing young women grew all the time. Ridgway later admitted that he targeted the most vulnerable.

things were likely to slow down a serial killer: either he died, or he was apprehended. Investigations turned to examining whether the killer had died in an accident or had been jailed for another crime.

Despite the number of victims, the media quickly forgot the Green River Killer, and life on the Pacific Highway returned to normal. Fae Brooks and her special task force did not close the case, however. The case had gone cold and members of the task force had other cases to deal with, but from time to time they returned to the files, looking for a new angle on the investigation.

Meanwhile, DNA analysis developed further, to become a new and extremely effective weapon for those thousands of cases where investigations had ground to a halt.

DNA analysis gave police the ability to effectively link suspects to cases in

ways they'd previously only been able to dream of. DNA from crime scenes revealed with great certainty whether the same criminal had committed previously unrelated crimes. If the

**“Why did
Ridgway kill?
Because he wanted
to... Because
he could”**

Bob Keppel, professor of criminal justice.

police had obtained DNA from a suspected perpetrator, they now had the opportunity to link them to the crime scene and possibly even the crime itself. DNA analysis was still very new at this point, and it took a long time

to go through old crimes. It was costly in both the procedure itself and the man hours involved, but slowly the police began to revisit cold cases. Finally, DNA analysis delivered the breakthrough that Fae Brooks's task force had been waiting for.

Suspect in spotlight again

Forensic scientists had been able to perform DNA analysis on various samples that had been collected at crime scenes over the years, which included many saliva samples from suspects in the Green River killings. In 2001, they analysed DNA found on Marcia Chapman's body. She was one of the two women who'd been found in the water of the Green River on 15th August 1982. The DNA proved a match for the sample of saliva that Gary Ridgway, owner of the red pickup, had submitted almost 19 years

»»

previously, at the time when Marie Malvar disappeared.

Fae Brooks and her task-force colleagues could barely comprehend the breakthrough. The experienced investigators had done everything they could to investigate this crime – involving tens of thousands of hours chasing the Green River Killer with solid, old-fashioned police work – and now a random laboratory technician

“I thought I could kill as many [prostitutes] as I wanted without getting caught”

Gary Ridgway on trial in 2003.

had suddenly sent them the name of the likely perpetrator.

On Friday, 30th November 2001, Gary Ridgway left his workplace, Kenworth Truck Company, where he'd worked as a spray painter for 28 years. He thought he was going home to enjoy a peaceful weekend with his wife, but outside, police were waiting to handcuff him. His DNA had been found on three more of the dead women, and now the net was tightening around the serial killer. In the

interrogation room, Ridgway appeared to be far from a bestial killer. He chatted politely with the investigators and praised the mattress in his cell, which he'd found comfortable. He suggested that maybe the cell was a little hot, but otherwise he was happy to report that he'd enjoyed his stay.

Ridgway appeared completely unaffected by the situation, and he seemed so ordinary that the interrogator, an experienced prosecutor called Patty Eakes, had a hard time believing that the police had caught the right man. However, experience told her that the vast majority of serial killers were, in fact, quite mundane – except for their heinous crimes. It's this normal behaviour that allows the criminal to get away with murder, but beneath the placid surface, madness always lurks.

For months, Ridgway stubbornly denied that he was the killer, but as evidence emerged linking him to more of the victims, he suddenly changed his story. After first concocting a tale claiming he was responsible for half the murders in concert with another party, he finally confessed that he had killed all the women on his own, confirming he was the Green River Killer.

During the hour-long interrogations that followed, Ridgway began to tell his story. He recounted his shaky relationship with his mother and how



HO/APP/RIITZAU SCANPIX

33-year-old Gary Ridgway came to the police's attention for the first time in 1982.

he was brought up to regard prostitutes as dirt.

A home life marked by violence

The Ridgway family seemed like most others in their sleepy suburb. Ridgway's father was a bus driver, and his mother was a homemaker. But inside the home's four walls, conditions were far from normal.

The parents argued constantly, and Ridgway often saw them fighting – or more precisely, watched his mother get beaten. His father worked most of the time and was rarely at home, but occasionally Ridgway accompanied him to work. His father angrily told Ridgway how horrible and worthless the prostitutes in the neighbourhood around the Pacific Highway were, but sometimes he stopped to make use of their services. Ridgway had to wait in the bus while his father sought out one of the women on the street, the same women he talked so hatefully about.

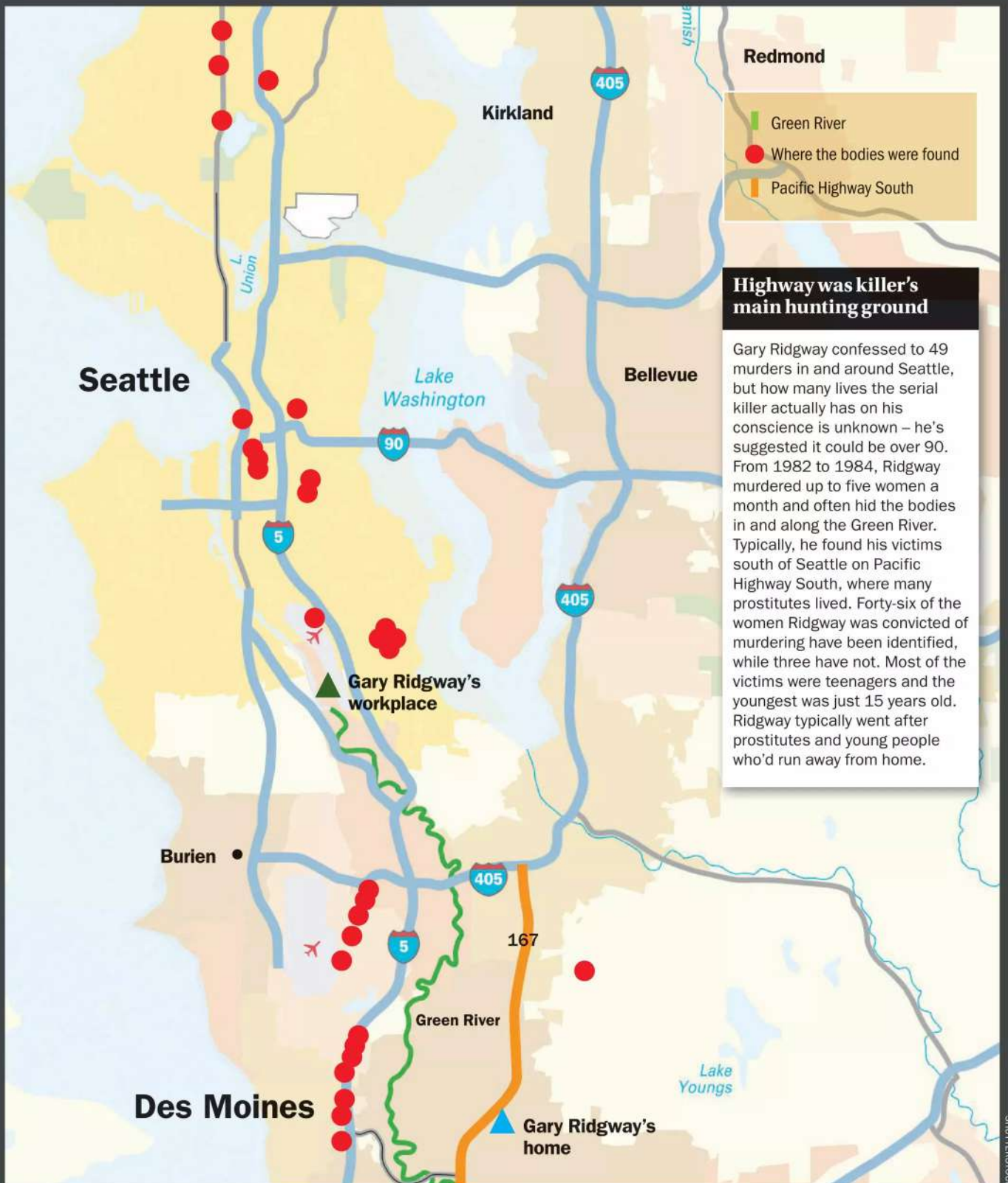
As a boy, Ridgway was good at sport, but not academic subjects. He was >>>



The sister of murder victim Debra Estes gave a speech after the trial.

Killer found his victims near home

Ridgway picked up his victims around Seattle, where he lived and worked. The Pacific Highway was his favourite hunting ground, and the Green River his perfect hiding place.



teased and called stupid, for which his mother scolded him and beat him when he talked about his problems at school. Far into his teens, Ridgway wet the bed, and his mother told neighbours and schoolmates about it. When he wet the bed, his mother would drag him to the bathroom, where she stripped off both her own and his clothes, then she would rub his genitals thoroughly with soap and water. This experience confused Ridgway's developing sexuality.

His mother liked to show off her body, so when she sunbathed topless or stood naked in the bathroom scrubbing his genitals, he would fantasize about sex with her while at the same time also imagining how he might kill her – a combination of rape and suffocation.

He felt the urge to hurt others. To live out his sadistic fantasies, he'd occasionally kill a cat, squirrel or another small animal. But one day, aged 15, Ridgway spotted a six-year-old boy rolling around on his own in a playground. Without warning, Ridgway pulled a knife from his pocket and plunged it into the boy's stomach. In that moment, he felt an overwhelming

sense of power over another person's life. And Ridgway loved it. He pulled the knife out, wiped the blood away and ran off. In Ridgway's eyes, this first assault on another human being was a success. He was never identified as the perpetrator of the crime, which the boy survived.

Recurring domestic problems

Ridgway finally escaped his family as a 19-year-old, when he joined the US Navy. He was sent to the Philippines, where he enjoyed the services of prostitutes in the bars of Manila. But the women disappointed him. He became infected with both gonorrhoea and chlamydia, and hated them for it. He now agreed with his father that prostitutes were society's worst scum.

While in the navy, Ridgway married his high-school girlfriend, Claudia Barrows, but the marriage only lasted a few years. After the divorce, he married Marcia Winslow in 1973, with whom he had a son, Matthew. Ridgway left the navy and worked at the Kenworth plant spray painting trucks.

Outwardly, his family lived a fairly ordinary suburban life, but as with his

childhood home, there were serious problems hidden away behind closed doors. Ridgway was controlling, impulsive and had an almost insatiable sex drive. He'd grabbed his spouse by the throat several times, only letting go when she collapsed. After a few years, Marcia could take no more and filed for divorce. Ridgway resisted at first, but when she finally left with their son in 1981, his love for Marcia was replaced by pure hatred.

A killer was born

Ridgway spent time with his son occasionally but for the most part he was alone. During this period, his hatred for women grew. He frequently paid visits to the Pacific Highway in order to pay for sex.

He began to fantasise about killing one of the prostitutes, and in July 1982, he made that dream come true. Ridgway picked up Marcia Chapman on the Pacific Highway and took her to a deserted area nearby. After first demanding oral sex, he then took the woman from behind. As he stood behind Chapman, he placed his forearm around her neck. She screamed in horror for him to stop, but Ridgway didn't let go. He applied all his strength until he heard Marcia Chapman's screams grow weaker and

400,000
pages of documents
and 15,000 photos
were collected
before the trial.



Ridgway (in white shirt) was pronounced guilty on 18th December 2003. During the trial, he'd confessed to more murders than any other US serial killer. Following the verdict, Ridgway was sentenced to life imprisonment in a solitary cell.

felt her suffocate. As the life ebbed from her, Ridgway felt sexual satisfaction stronger than anything else he'd experienced. He'd taken revenge. Revenge on his dominant mother. Revenge on the prostitutes who'd infected him. Revenge on ex-wife Marcia who'd left him.

Ridgway felt satisfaction in every single fibre of his being. But the feeling was short-lived, and it was just one day later when he began to think about murdering again. To avoid suspicion on the Pacific Highway, he occasionally picked up a prostitute with whom he would have sex quickly and reward with gifts and good payments, but only to cover up his almost insatiable sadistic inclinations. Some of the women he subsequently murdered were mutilated while they lay lifeless on the ground. He also found himself occasionally returning to perform necrophilia on the dead bodies several days or weeks after the murder.

Caught by the past

In 1982 and 1983, Ridgway's entire life was focussed on killing prostitutes, but in 1984, after about 40 murders, he met and fell in love with the divorced Judith Mawson. They moved into his house together, got married and spent their free time on common interests such as music and dancing.

Mawson had no idea what her sweetheart had done and what horrors their shared home had been host to. She didn't know, for example, that Maria Malvar had once lain tied to the bed praying for her life, while Ridgway stood out in the front yard chatting with the police officer looking for her. Malvar did not survive that day in Ridgway's bed, which the couple now shared.

Once he was leading a happy suburban life, Gary Ridgway almost forgot about killing. He didn't expect to ever be held accountable for his crimes.

Ridgway ended up pleading guilty to 49 murders. In court he received 49 life sentences without the possibility of parole. To escape the death penalty, he agreed to talk and help the police find the remains of the women whose relatives had hoped in vain to see return over the previous 20 years. ■



Defenders M Prothero (left) and A Savage saved Ridgway from the death penalty.



Investigators searched the woods near Seattle for the remains of Ridgway's victims.



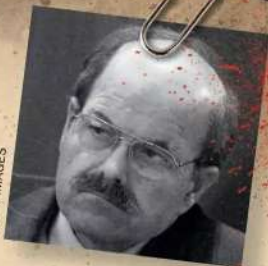
The serial killer told police where he had hidden some of his victims.

RON WUZZER/STRINGER/GETTY IMAGES

KING COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE/GETTY IMAGES

KING COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE/GETTY IMAGES

GETTY IMAGES



DENNIS RADER

"BTK"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARKS:** Sadism, fetishism
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 10
- **MURDER METHODS:** Choking, stabbing, hanging
- **LOCATION:** Sedgwick County, Kansas, USA
- **STATUS:** Sentenced in 2005 to ten life sentences for ten murders

Father and churchgoer was sadistic psychopath:

Bind, torture, kill!

2004 No one had any idea why Dennis Rader suddenly started sending mocking letters to the police. Perhaps he wanted to relive the sadistic murders he'd committed two decades earlier. In the letters, Rader boasted of his crimes and taunted the police for never having arrested him. But time – and technology – were against the killer.



That Friday seemed like any other news day at *The Wichita Eagle*. With a daily circulation of almost 50,000, the newspaper could boast of being the largest in the industrial city of Wichita on the Arkansas River in the central United States. As usual, a secretary was tasked with going through the pile of letters and packages from the morning delivery. But on that day, 17th March 2004, one letter stood out – it contained a copy of a driving licence belonging to a woman called Vicki Wegerle. She had been killed almost 20 years earlier, on 16th September 1986, and the killer had never been found. The envelope also contained three pictures from the crime scene, in which the murdered woman could be seen from different angles. The sender's real identity wasn't included in the letter, but it did bear the name "Bill Thomas Killman" – BTK.

The reference was understood by everyone. Back in the 1970s, a serial killer who, in anonymous letters, had referred to himself as "BTK" – an abbreviation of bind, torture, kill – had

spread fear and terror through Kansas's largest city. But the last that had been heard from the killer was a cryptic letter in 1979. By 2004, the investigation had become a cold case, and most people assumed that the suspected murderer had long since died.

A few months earlier, in the autumn of 2003, the unknown serial killer had once again come into the media spotlight when a local lawyer, Robert Beattie, announced that he was in the process of writing a book about both the crimes and the investigation back in the 1970s. And in January 2004, *The Wichita Eagle* had published an article in connection with the thirtieth anniversary of the killings of the Otero family, BTK's first victims.

Now the same newspaper had suddenly received a gruesome message from the alleged killer. At first, the journalists in the newsroom considered the letter to be a sick joke, but they still

did the right thing and forwarded the contents of the envelope to the police. Just a few days later, police investigator Ken Landwehr was able to tell the citizens of Wichita at a press conference that BTK had again made contact. In

this regard, he stressed: "It is without a doubt the most unusual case we've ever had in Wichita."

In a short time, the police received almost 2,000 tips and brought former suspects in for fresh interrogations.

Meanwhile, worried citizens stormed the city's locksmiths, gun dealers and shops selling alarm systems. Exactly the same thing had happened back in the 1970s when BTK had started wreaking havoc on Wichita.

And BTK had not just returned for a brief comment – on 5th May 2004, the local TV station KAKE received a letter that came with a complex riddle about the investigation, stolen ID cards and a chapter overview for a book entitled *The BTK Story*. The opening chapter was called 'A Serial Killer is Born'.

In early June of that year, a plastic bag containing a brown envelope was found stuck to a stop sign in the centre of town. In addition to a drawing entitled 'The Sexual Thrill is My Bill' of a bound, naked woman hanging from a noose, the envelope contained a detailed and morbid description of the Otero murders, in particular the killing of 11-year-old Josie Otero.

Stalked single women

In July 2004, a package marked "BTK" was discovered in a box of books in one of Wichita's public libraries. Among other things, it contained a letter in which the sender claimed to have been behind the murder of a young man in town a few weeks previously. The death had originally been attributed to suicide, which would later prove to be correct. But for Wichita's police, the information caused great concern: if such a crime had taken place, BTK wasn't just messing with the authorities – he was also back on his murderous trail. For chief investigator Ken Landwehr, the most gruesome part >>>

20 minutes:
the length of Rader's
speech before his
sentencing. He half-
heartedly apologised
for the 10 murders.

■ KILLER INSPIRED BY YOUTH REBEL

Hippie leader was Rader's idol

The serial killer's role model brainwashed cult members and ordered them to commit murder.

Dennis Rader was deeply fascinated by famous criminals, such as Jack the Ripper and, in particular, countryman Charles Manson, and longed to become just as famous.

In the 1960s, singer-songwriter Manson led the hippie doomsday cult the Manson Family, based in California. Manson brainwashed the cult's members and convinced them that he was the reincarnation of Jesus. He also gave his disciples drugs, then ordered them to commit murder. In 1969, cult members brutally stabbed seven randomly selected people. One of

the victims was actress Sharon Tate, who was married to film director Roman Polanski and eight months pregnant at the time.



Manson received nine life sentences and died at the age of 83 in 2017.



In 2005, more than 30 years after the first murders, Dennis Rader was finally taken to court.

of the letter was a message on the last page: "I have spotted a woman that I think lives alone and/or is a spotted latch key kid. Just got to work out the details. I'm much older (not feeble) now and have to conditions [sic] myself carefully. Also my thinking process is not as sharp as it uses [sic] to be. ... I think fall or winter would be just about right for the HIT. Got to do it this year or next ... as time is running out for me."

In early 1974, 29-year-old Dennis Rader felt restless. He had been

"I think fall or winter would be just about right for the hit. Got to do it this year or next"

Dennis Rader in a letter from July 2004.

employed by one of Wichita's aircraft manufacturers, Cessna, but the oil crisis had forced the company to lay off more workers the year before.

Rader was miserable being unemployed - he had too much time on his hands and too little to do with it. His wife, Paula Dietz, worked as an accountant at a hospital but didn't like driving when the roads were slippery with snow or ice, so Rader made it part of his daily routine to drive her to and from work.

Dennis Rader spent the hours in between driving around to different

neighbourhoods in the city, where he kept an eye out for single women and fantasised about tying up, torturing and killing them. As the days went by, he became increasingly preoccupied with a Spanish woman who'd recently moved to his neighbourhood. The 33-year-old, Julie Otero, often dropped her children off at a nearby school.

Dennis Rader began stalking her. He noted when she and the rest of the family left home, where they went, and when they returned home. Slowly, a fantasy formed in his mind and he came up with a plan to break in.

Felt ignored by his mother

On the surface, Dennis Rader had always seemed completely normal. He was born on 9th March 1945, in south-eastern Kansas, the son of William and Dorothea Rader. After being a marine for many years, his father got a job working for the electricity supplier in Wichita, so the family moved into a modest but nice home in the city. Soon after, three younger brothers arrived. Dennis Rader became a Boy Scout and went to Riverview School. Despite learning difficulties, his grades were consistently average.

The pattern of mediocrity continued as he completed high school and later continued at Wesleyan University. As a 21-year-old, Rader dropped out of education and joined the air force, where he was deployed on several occasions, including in Japan and Turkey. After four years, he stopped serving and moved to Park City, a



Police guarding the house where Rader lived with his wife and two children.

suburb of north Wichita. Here he met Paula Dietz in the Lutheran Church, where they were both very active. Shortly after, the couple got married. Dennis Rader got a job in a butcher's department in a supermarket and also began studying electronics at night

Both adults and children were killed

First, Rader killed a mother, father and their two children. Then he attacked women whom he abused, then strangled, hanged or stabbed.



1974
Joseph Otero

15th January: The 38-year-old father of five was strangled with a cord.



1974
Julie Otero

15th January: Before her death, she begged Rader to spare her children.



1974
Joey Otero

15th January: Rader watched as nine-year-old Joey died of suffocation.



1974
Josephine Otero

15th January: The 11-year-old was partly undressed and hanged in the basement.



school in El Dorado. By no means did Rader stand out from the crowd, but beneath the surface he realised that forbidden lusts were smouldering. As they had been since he was very young.

Once, his mother had tried to get up from the couch, but couldn't because a

ring on her hand had got caught on the cover. She asked Dennis for help, which triggered a thrill in his body. He loved his mother dearly, but had always felt that she ignored him. Now he stood there, looking at the trapped, helpless woman, who with increasing

frustration was begging him for help. He carried this vivid image with him further into adulthood.

Over the years, he began capturing animals, especially farm cats, which he tortured and strangled. As a teenager, fantasies of torturing captured, »»



1974

Kathryn Bright

4th April: Kathryn was stabbed to death. Her brother was shot but survived.



1977

Shirley Vian

17th March: After strangling Shirley, Rader masturbated over the body.



1977

Nancy Fox

8th December: The 25-year-old was tied to her bed and strangled.



1985

Marine Hedge

27th April: The widow, who lived on Rader's road, was strangled.



1986

Vicki Wegerle

16th September: The 28-year-old mum of two was tied up, beaten and strangled.



1991

Dolores Davis

19th January: Rader tied the 62-year-old to a bed and strangled her.

defenceless women ran over and over in his head. He started stalking women, and stole lingerie from shops, which he wore himself. At the same time, his fascination with famous serial killers grew, not least the infamous hippie cult, the Manson Family.

Rader cut out sexy clothing and underwear ads from newspapers and magazines, drew ropes on them, and stuck them on cards that he kept in his wallet. When he felt the urge for sex, he went alone to a motel, tied his wrists and ankles, and covered his head with a bag to make breathing difficult. In his imagination, he thought how exciting it would be to commit murder.

Nightmare for family

Wichita was still in the depths of winter when, at 08.00 on 15th January 1974, Dennis Rader sneaked into the grounds of the Otero family home. He crept along the bushes in the front yard, close to the small porch of the white wooden house with black shutters. Next to the house stood two spruce trees that had been covered with a thick layer of snow for the past few weeks.

At the back of the house, Dennis Rader found the telephone cable. He cut it with a knife, and drew his gun. Then he opened the back door.

Inside, Rader had expected to find Julie Otero alone. But he had miscalculated; in addition to Julie, her husband Joseph and children Josephine and Joey, aged 11 and nine, sat at a table, which was spread with breakfast food. Their German shepherd, Lucky, was also in the kitchen.

Dennis Rader aimed his gun at Joseph Otero, while telling the terrified family that he was a wanted criminal in need of food and money. First, he ordered them to lock the dog out in the backyard, after which he forced the children and adults down on to the floor, tied them up, then led them into the bedroom. Here, Rader put a bag over the father's head and strangled him with a cord. Next, he strangled the mother with his bare hands. He slowly



Dennis Rader listens to testimonies during the trial in August 2005.

suffocated nine-year-old Joey with a bag over his head, while sitting on a chair himself, watching life ebb out of the boy's body. Eventually, he led 11-year-old Josephine Otero down to the basement and hanged her, using a rope he had tied around a water pipe. Before he left the murder scene, Rader stole souvenirs in the form of jewellery, ID papers, various trinkets and, not least, Julie Otero's underwear.

When the three eldest Otero children, Charlie, Daniel and Carmen, came home from school later in the day and found the bodies, they called the police in horror. Shortly afterwards, news of the quadruple murder spread throughout the city.

Less than three months later, Dennis Rader was back in action. On 4th April 1974, he broke into the home of 21-year-old Kathryn Bright, whom he had previously identified as a victim. He hid in her bedroom but, unexpectedly, she didn't come home alone – she was accompanied by her 19-year-old younger brother, Kevin Bright. After threatening the siblings with a gun and tying them in separate rooms, Dennis Rader tried to strangle

Kevin Bright with a sock, but he wriggled free and attacked Rader. During the fight, Rader shot the young man twice in the head. He then hurried to Kathryn Bright and stabbed her several times before running off.

Kevin Bright miraculously survived, but with life-changing injuries. Kathryn Bright died in hospital.

In both cases, the police had nothing to go on. But in October 1974, *The Wichita Eagle* received an anonymous call with a tip about a letter that was found in a textbook at a public library in the city. In the letter, police were able to read a detailed description of the murders of the Otero family. The letter wasn't signed, but ended with: "The code words for me will be... bind them, torture [sic] them, kill them, B.T.K."

Sent poems to police

While fear of the savage killer spread through Wichita, Rader returned to his seemingly normal life. And he had plenty to keep him busy, when first his daughter Kerri and then his son Brian were born. In addition to taking care of his family responsibilities, Rader began attending night school, where he took a bachelor's degree in the administration of justice. He then got a permanent job at ADT Security Services, which sold and installed alarm systems to both businesses and homeowners, who in many cases were worried about the BTK killer.

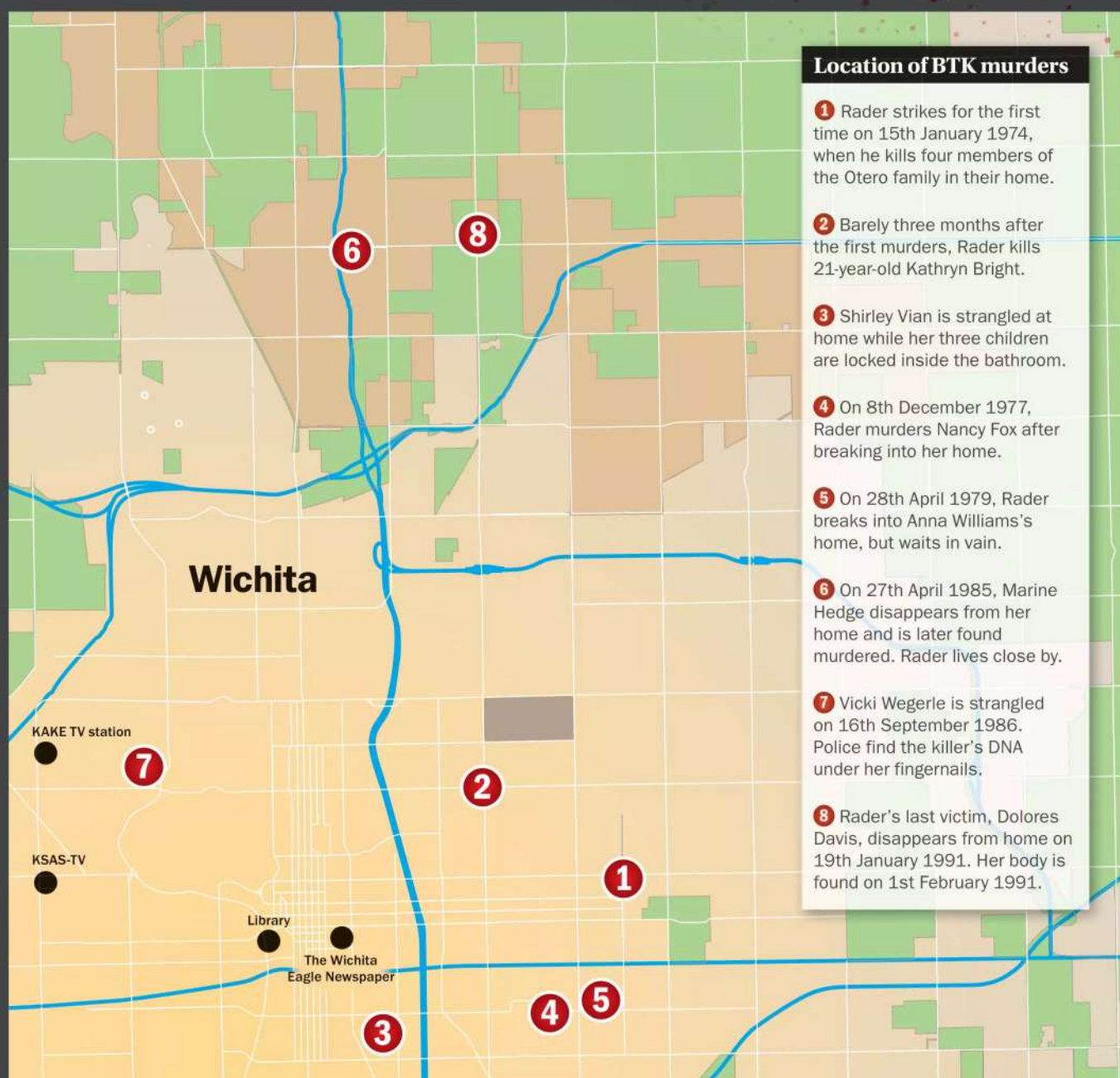
For over three years, Dennis Rader was so busy with everyday life that he didn't have time to fully live out his dark fantasies, but he continued to stalk women he fantasised about killing.

In March 1977, Rader struck once again. He surprised 24-year-old Shirley Vian in her home just as she came out of the bathroom wearing a bathrobe. First, he locked her three small children inside the bathroom, then he partially undressed the woman, pulled a plastic bag over her head, and tied cords around her neck, hands and feet. Eventually, he strangled her to death. Later that year, in December, he killed 25-year-old Nancy Fox, whom he had previously picked out as a victim. She worked as a secretary in one of the city's jewellery stores. During the day, he cut

30 hours: the length of Rader's confession in court. All the shocking details of each murder came to light.

Savage murders shook Wichita

BTK killer, Dennis Rader, typically picked out single women and stalked them. To draw attention to himself, he sent letters along with poems and photos to the media.



her telephone cable and then crawled into Fox's empty apartment through a bedroom window. He waited there until she came home.

For Dennis Rader, killing was not enough. He was obsessed with old police cases about men controlling

their victims, and looked up to serial killers such as Ted Bundy and Jack the Ripper. He dreamed of becoming just as infamous as these monsters. The morning after the murder of Nancy Fox, he therefore called the police from a payphone and tipped them off that Fox

was lying dead in her home. In the following months, he sent anonymous and confusing letters to both the police and various local media, including a poem entitled 'Oh! Death to Nancy', which was inspired by the American folk song 'O Death'. In the >>>

poem, Rader described how he was driven to kill.

In 1978, he sent a postcard to *The Wichita Eagle* with a cryptic poem entitled 'Shirley Locks'. When no one understood the allusion, he sent an angry letter to KAKE TV station a few

“How could a guy like me, church member, raised a family ... do those sort of things?”

Dennis Rader in a TV interview.

days after, in which he stated that as well as the killings of the Otero family, he was behind the murders of Kathryn Bright, Shirley Vian and Nancy Fox.

Now no one could be in the slightest doubt that a serial killer was terrorising Wichita. The police were on high alert and urged all citizens to carefully check their doors, windows and telephone lines. Even with the renewed attention, Dennis Rader didn't hold back. In 1979, he broke into Anna Williams's house,

but the 63-year-old widow was not at home and he had to wait for several hours. Eventually, Rader lost patience, stole some items and left the house.

Subsequently, Dennis Rader was furious that Anna Williams had managed to escape. Two months later, he therefore sent a letter with a poem attached to both KAKE and Anna Williams herself. The title of the poem was 'Oh, Anna Why Didn't You Appear'.

The poem became the last Wichita heard from BTK for almost 25 years. In many ways, it was one of the worst things Dennis Rader could put the city's residents through – to just disappear without a trace.

The killer returned

Even though Dennis Rader was keeping a low profile, it didn't mean that he'd managed to control his dark side. While living a normal everyday life as a family man, where as well as being involved in the local church, he was also the leader of his son's scout troop, he continued to stalk women and satisfy himself with the many items he had stolen from them over the years. From time to time, he took things a step further. One evening, on 27th April 1985, while at a scout camp with his son, he excused

himself on the pretext of having a headache. But instead of going back to his tent, he drove to the home of Marine Hedge, who had lost her husband a year earlier. He cut the telephone cable, broke into her house and hid until she returned home a few hours later. Just as she turned off the light, he emerged from the closet and switched it back on.

After the murder, Dennis Rader put the body in his boot and drove to the Lutheran Church, for which he had the keys because of his parish council work. He covered the windows with black plastic bags and photographed Hedge's bound body in various positions. Eight days later, her body was found in a ditch on the edge of town.

In September 1986, Rader called on 28-year-old Vicki Wegerle and introduced himself as a telephone repairman. When her husband, Bill Wegerle, came home, he found his wife strangled on the bed.

The last victim was 62-year-old Dolores Davis. On 19th January 1991, the then 45-year-old Dennis Rader was again away at a scout camp, but he made an excuse and left. Shortly afterwards, he smashed the glass sliding doors at the back of Dolores Davis's house with a cement block, after



Killer was a 'good Christian'

In church, Rader had prayed for the speedy arrest of the BTK killer.

Disgust, anger, dismay and disbelief – with those words, the pastor of the church with which Rader had been associated described his reaction to the arrest. He and the congregation were deeply shaken – they'd regarded Rader as a good Christian and very kind man. Rader had even attended a prayer meeting in which the group had prayed for the BTK killer to be caught.



In shock, Pastor Michael G Clark apologises for Dennis Rader's atrocities.

which he tied the woman to her bed and strangled her.

After the murder, Rader returned to the scout camp, but the following night he left again – this time to photograph the body in various positions. Two weeks later, police found Dolores Davis strangled, tied up and wearing a mask under a bridge over a river outside the city. A few months after the murder of

Davis, Dennis Rader got a job as a compliance officer in the Wichita suburb of Park City. Here he quickly gained a reputation for zealously enforcing the rules. He handed out fines for minor offences left, right and centre – for example, if someone's grass was too long or their garden hose was the wrong colour. An elderly woman also complained that Rader had killed her dog for no reason.

For many years, Rader was a trusted employee of Park City, and in his own neighbourhood he was seen as a polite and respectable family man and a good citizen, who was deeply committed to the local church. This is how Dennis Rader also viewed himself – there was a clear dividing line between his normal life and his dark side.

When Rader's serial killer persona was suddenly brought back into the public eye in the autumn of 2003 and spring of 2004, he was initially flattered by the attention, and it gave him a great deal of satisfaction. However, he wasn't quite so happy that other people were controlling his story. So, there was nothing he could do but return.

In October 2004, a UPS driver came across an envelope in a stack of letters – it wasn't properly sealed. As he studied

it closely, he noticed the letters "BTK", which prompted him to hand the letter over to the police.

Three months after the serial killer had last been heard from, he was communicating again: the contents of the envelope consisted of several pieces of paper. Some of them described a so-called uno-dos-tres theory, which supposedly explained the philosophical and mathematical beliefs that determined the killer's complicated universe. The letter also contained pictures of children, altered to make them look gagged and bound, a cryptic poem with threats directed at investigator Ken Landwehr, as well as new drafts of the killer's biography, including bizarre childhood memories, whose purpose was to lead the police astray. Twenty-five years had passed since the citizens of Wichita had last been terrorised by BTK. Now the unidentified serial killer was back, and he continued sending cryptic messages to taunt the police and authorities.

In December 2004, Wichita police found a package in one of the city's parks. It contained, in addition to Nancy Fox's driver's licence, a doll with its hands and feet tied, and a plastic bag over its head. Police feared the doll was a warning about an impending murder. Meanwhile, Dennis Rader behaved like a typical husband, father and

Dolores Davis's family held a press conference after the killer was convicted.



GETTY IMAGES

1,300

suspects in the
Wichita area had
DNA samples taken
as part of the police
investigation.



Shirley Vian was strangled while her three young children were locked in the bathroom.

citizen. After serving as vice-chairman of the Lutheran Church's parish council for many years, he was elected chairman in January 2005. A natural rise through the ranks for a man who had been an active and dedicated churchgoer all his life.

A few days later, he sent his next message to the people of Wichita. He left a breakfast cereal box containing information that was supposed to mislead the police in the back of a pickup truck in front of a warehouse. But the plan failed. The driver found the box but just threw it away. When Rader realised that the expected attention wasn't forthcoming, he sent a new message about the box. Police managed to locate it in a pile of rubbish.

In February 2005, Rader once again left a cereal box; this one was in a rural area on the outskirts of the city. The package included another bound doll, this time resembling 11-year-old Josephine Otero. Several times, Rader also wrote directly to the police. In one of the letters, he asked whether the police would be able to track him down if he sent them a message on a floppy disk. In the letter, he asked the police to respond via an ad in *The Wichita Eagle*. They did so shortly after, indicating that he could safely and securely send them a disk. A few days later, the local TV station KSAS-TV received a package that, in addition to a gold necklace and the book *Rules of Prey*, a novel about a serial killer, also contained a floppy disk with several messages.

For a long time, Dennis Rader had been messing with the authorities, but he didn't realise that detection techniques had significantly improved since the 1970s, and the police were now breathing down his neck. Since taking the credit for the murder of Vicki Wegerle in his first letter, the police had found traces of DNA under Wegerle's nails – which they hadn't had the opportunity to do at the time of the murder – and had taken more than 1,300 DNA samples from suspected men in the Wichita area. In connection with the cereal box left at the warehouse, the police had reviewed footage from surveillance cameras located in the car park, but

they were so far away that they could only just make out a figure. However, the police were able to ascertain that the person in question was driving a black Jeep Cherokee.

The floppy disk would prove to be decisive. Rader had deleted everything else on it beforehand, but didn't know that the police could check the metadata. Here the detectives found an empty document modified by a "Dennis". They found that the disk had been used at the Park City library and at the Lutheran Church. A quick internet search revealed that a man called Dennis Rader headed the church's parish council.

Shortly after, investigators drove past Dennis Rader's house and noticed a black Jeep Cherokee in the driveway. Now the police had very strong evidence – they were just missing the smoking gun. Therefore, the police were allowed to see the results of a test that Rader's daughter had had done at a local hospital. The test revealed a family match with the DNA taken from Wegerle's nails – Wegerle's killer had to be closely related to Rader's daughter.

Hit by shock

In the afternoon of 25th February 2005, Dennis Rader was driving in his car. As he often did, he'd been into town for lunch. As he approached home, he was suddenly ordered to pull over by a police car.

"Mr Rader, do you know why you're going downtown?" asked the officer.

"Oh, I have suspicions why," replied Dennis Rader. The next morning, the Wichita police held a very well-attended press conference. Chief Norman Williams announced: "BTK is arrested!"


On 17th August 2005, Dennis Rader was sentenced to the maximum penalty possible: the killer received ten life sentences without the possibility of parole for 175 years.

For Rader's family, friends, fellow churchgoers and neighbours, the revelation came as a shock. No one could possibly have imagined that Rader could be a serial killer. In an interview with a KAKE-TV reporter on 2nd July 2005, the killer himself put the

■ KILLER LEFT CLUES


DNA was conclusive evidence

The serial killer left a large number of objects at the crime scenes – but DNA evidence was crucial.




Detective Ken Landwehr displays the handcuffs found on one of the victims.

After playing with the police for years, Rader was caught. During the trial of the suspected serial killer, the police presented a large amount of compelling evidence: in Rader's car, they had found tights of the same brand as those that one of the victims had been strangled with, and a floppy disk that the killer had sent to the police contained his first name, among other clues. Rader's grammar and handwriting matched the letters and poems he'd sent to the police and media. DNA found under the nails of one victim turned out to be conclusive evidence – it matched Rader's. In court, Rader confessed to the ten murders and described each in detail, but without remorse.



The disk revealed Rader's name and helped catch him.

One of Rader's victims was wearing this mask, which was included in the police evidence.



The letter to The Wichita Eagle read "Bill Thomas Killman" – BTK.

shock into words: "How could a guy like me, church member, raised a family, go out and do those sort of things? I want the people of Sedgwick County, the United States and the world to know that I am a serial killer... It's a dark side

of me." During the police interrogation, Rader had said that at the time of his arrest he was in the process of planning more murders and had even identified his next victim. As he remarked, "There are a lot of lucky people."

GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK & RITZAU SCAMPX



A serial killer's brain is shaped by genetic defects and abuse

Nerve signals run in unique ways through serial killers' brains, which is what allows them to kill with ice-cool intent and without remorse. The act of killing plays out a fantasy that demands each attack follows a ritualistic pattern that gives each serial killer their own unique signature.

BACKGROUND

Recent research has revealed huge insights into psychopaths' brains. Defects in brain centres, allied with poor neural connections and excessive use of chemical neurotransmitters, make the psychopath both unscrupulous and emotionally cold. The hope is that this new understanding can provide an effective treatment for the disorder, which so far is incurable.

Surinder Koli appeared completely calm and showed no signs of remorse or any other strong emotions during the interrogation. He was the servant of a wealthy businessman in an industrial district outside New Delhi in India, and had been telling police investigators about his actions for the past year and a half. When he was home alone, he repeatedly lured small girls from as young as four into his master's house. Then he strangled the children and performed necrophilia on the bodies.

He remembered little about the crime itself, and gave no explanation for his motives, but felt no guilt. Twice he'd discovered that he'd made a mistake and strangled a young boy instead of a girl. In both cases, he didn't think he'd had sex with the dead body but couldn't be sure.

On the other hand, Koli's memories were more vivid when he came to recall how he'd drag the dead body into his personal bathroom. Although he never considered the consequences of his actions, he would feel anxious as he carefully dismembered the body before placing the head, intestines, limbs and other body parts into plastic bags.

The 31-year-old Indian man soberly recounted how on at least two occasions he'd cut chunks of meat from the victims' arms or breast to serve himself a cannibalistic meal. Other times, he recalled how he'd temporarily

interrupt his ritual because guests were arriving at the house. Koli would then assume his duties as a servant, before returning to his bathroom to continue the dismemberment. Under cover of darkness, he'd throw the plastic bags containing the remains into a sewer drain in the garden, where they were finally found in December 2006. The police counted nineteen skulls and 608 other body parts. They may have originated from over 30 children who'd disappeared without trace from the area in recent times. After a trial spanning many years, Koli was finally sentenced to death in 2019 for a total of ten murders.

Emotional mask hides true self

During the investigation into his case, Koli was examined by psychologists at the Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology in New Delhi. They performed an IQ test and found that Koli was unusually gifted with a good memory. When interviewing him, they noticed how he would sit for hours without changing facial expression. He was then shown pictures and inkblots and asked to describe them. Koli responded reluctantly, only able to "offer descriptions with no content, or

emotional response". His responses were both "veiled, and guarded", and when asked to deal with emotional situations, "tended to use denial, avoidance, and escape into fantasy". This constant dissembling can be viewed as if the subject is always wearing a mask to hide their true self.

When asked to draw a man and woman, Koli made a childish drawing of a young man and then a young girl aged around eight to ten.

The psychologists discovered that Koli was sexually abused by an older man when he was ten years old. They asked many questions, all unanswered,

including: did he think he was going to be killed? Was there oral sex? And was he afraid of being eaten? Koli did admit that as a teenager he began to masturbate to fantasies about killing young girls, performing necrophilia on the body, and cutting it to pieces.

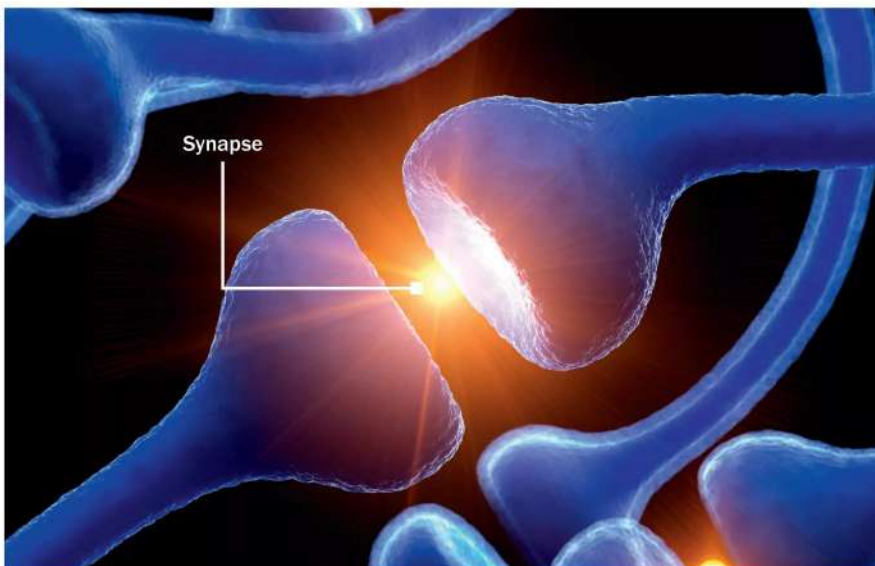
The conclusion drawn was that Surinder Koli was a psychopath and sexually disturbed, and held a deep hatred for women. He was a ticking bomb who – despite his ability to live a relatively normal life – was ready to kill another human being at any time.

Serial killers often psychopaths

Surinder Koli is similar in many ways to other serial killers. Researchers who've studied the psychological profiles of serial killers conclude that while only around one percent of the general population are psychopaths, the diagnosis is true for over half of all serial killers. Psychopaths suffer from what's known as an anti-social personality disorder, which is primarily characterised by a pronounced lack of compassion, conscience and guilt.

They appear extremely superficial because in addition to the above characteristics, they don't foster deep emotions themselves, and their lack of emotion also includes the ability to feel fear. This absence of fear encourages risky behaviour, where they're willing to take chances or use aggressive methods to achieve their aims. A charming and lyrical exterior masks a selfish and

608 bones and 19 skulls from over 30 murdered children were found in the sewer beneath where Koli lived.



The brain's synapses convey neurotransmitters between nerve cells. These signal substances control our behaviour, and there is an imbalance of them in the brains of serial killers.

A psychopath's brain reacts abnormally to ethical dilemmas

Psychopaths are fully aware of what's immoral, but their brains don't react normally. Doctor Carla Harenski has scanned the brains of psychopaths and healthy people while they view images divided into three levels of ethical content: morally offensive, unpleasant, and neutral. The results suggest that psychopaths cannot process the fear it triggers in others when they transcend moral boundaries.

MORALLY OFFENSIVE



UNPLEASANT



NEUTRAL



In **non-psychopaths**, two small areas – ATC in the temporal lobe and VPC in the frontal lobe – were activated when they saw morally offensive images. The areas were less active when viewing neutral or unpleasant images.

Anterior temporal cortex (ATC)

– this area acts as a form of alarm that will trigger if a moral boundary has been breached.

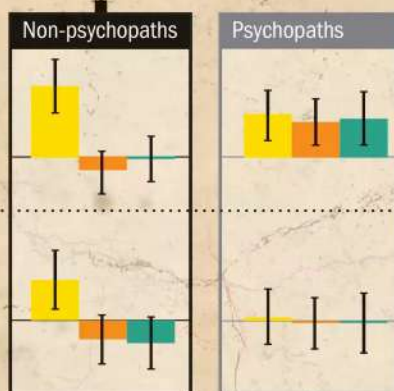
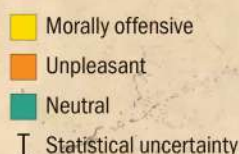


Ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VPC)

– the area is involved in processing fear and a person's ability to weigh up risky decisions.



The **psychopath's** brain does not differentiate between the three types of images. In the ATC area, the three images triggered the same high activity. None of the images triggered any activity in the VPC area in the frontal lobe.



Non-psychopaths



In healthy individuals, morally offensive images activated an area in the right hemisphere of the **amygdala** (yellow spot), an area that wasn't activated at all in psychopaths. The amygdala is involved in processing emotional impressions.

Psychopaths





Henry Lee Lucas was convicted of 11 murders but boasted of killing 100 women.

manipulative interior that's rarely placid and constantly requires stimulation to avoid becoming bored. As with Koli, psychopathic serial killers feel neither pity nor guilt for their victims, and their superficial charm makes it easier to lure victims to them. One of the US's most famous serial killers, Ted Bundy, was described as a charming and handsome young man who travelled around the United States in the 1970s, killing at least 14 girls and young women.

Bundy often enticed his victims by pretending he'd been injured. He would then rape them, club them to death and – in at least 12 cases – cut off their heads. Bundy described himself as a “cold-hearted son of a bitch”, and his defender described him as “the very definition of heartless evil”.

Brain scans have revealed that many psychopaths have a general weakening

in the nerve pathways that connect the brain's frontal lobe with the amygdala (the emotional centre) and the visual processing centre in the occipital lobe. Scientists believe that psychopaths partially lose their ability to understand visual impressions that involve emotions such as fear, depression or surprise. This means that when a psychopathic serial killer commits a monstrous act, they probably know full well they're violating all socially accepted rules and performing a morally reprehensible act but remain unaffected and feel no remorse afterwards.

Brain traffic lights

Another feature common to many serial killers is that around two-thirds

have been subjected to physical, mental or sexual abuse during childhood. A lot of research suggests that childhood abuse may be the trigger that creates a serial killer. Abuse and other traumatic experiences leave traces in the brain and affect the flow of nerve impulses for the rest of a person's life.

This occurs because of the way the brain's many millions of nerve cells communicate with each other using electrical signals, which run through the elongated nerve cells almost like electric current travels through a wire. But nerve cells aren't directly connected to each other; instead, they are separated by synapses, which are infinitesimal gaps mere fractions of a millimetre wide. To traverse the gap, the electrical nerve signal must first be converted into a chemical one

comprising biochemical molecules known as neurotransmitters. These then flow over the synapse from one nerve end to the other, where they're intercepted and converted back into an

“Ted was the only person in my 40 years ... that I would say was absolutely born evil”

Defender John Henry Browne on Ted Bundy.

electrical nerve signal, which is then transmitted on through the other nerve.

Neurotransmitters come in many different types, including dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine. Some are designed to help push the nerve impulse further across the synapse, while others work in reverse to make it harder for the impulse to pass. In this way, neurotransmitters act like traffic lights to regulate the winding pathways of nerve impulses through the brain, and thus they play a crucial role in people's thoughts and actions.

Abuse leaves traces in the brain

Studies have shown that childhood abuse increases the brain's production of dopamine and norepinephrine, while lessening the effects of serotonin. These chemical neurotransmitters play

a crucial role in our mood and behaviour, and someone's

personality changes markedly if their balance shifts.

On its own, dopamine makes people take more risks, while norepinephrine increases alertness and reaction times.

Increased levels of both dopamine and norepinephrine lead to more impulsive, risky behaviour with less thought for the consequences. Serotonin usually helps to calm us down, but low levels of it can – when combined with high levels of norepinephrine – make us more

2/3 of all serial killers have been subjected to physical, mental or sexual abuse.

aggressive, and when combined with increased amounts of dopamine, lead to a larger sex drive.

These and other effects don't just limit themselves to presenting immediately after the assault. That's because the neurotransmitters cause the nerve impulses to take different routes, which imprint themselves in the brain to establish completely new nerve pathways and corresponding patterns of behaviour.

One serial killer who was heavily influenced by childhood abuse was American Henry Lee Lucas. As a child, he was forced to go to school wearing a dress and watch his mother – who was a prostitute – have sex with men other than Lucas's father. She was also violent to both Lucas and his alcoholic father, who'd lost both legs in an accident.

As a ten-year-old, Lucas injured an eye in a fight, and after his mother ignored it, complications arose so the eye had to be removed. He dropped out of school in 6th Grade, ran away from home and – according to his own confessions – started killing.

Lucas ran rampant through the US from 1960 to 1983 – most of his victims were people he knew well. His preferred method was stabbing and suffocation. He was convicted for murdering his own mother aged 24, and after his release ten years later, carried on killing. His victims included his 82-year-old employer, his girlfriend of 15 years, and an unidentified woman dubbed 'Orange Socks', but he confessed to dozens more.

Genetic defects alter personality

Researchers believe that the abuse Lucas suffered played a key role in turning him into a serial killer, but a person's innate genes also play a part >>>

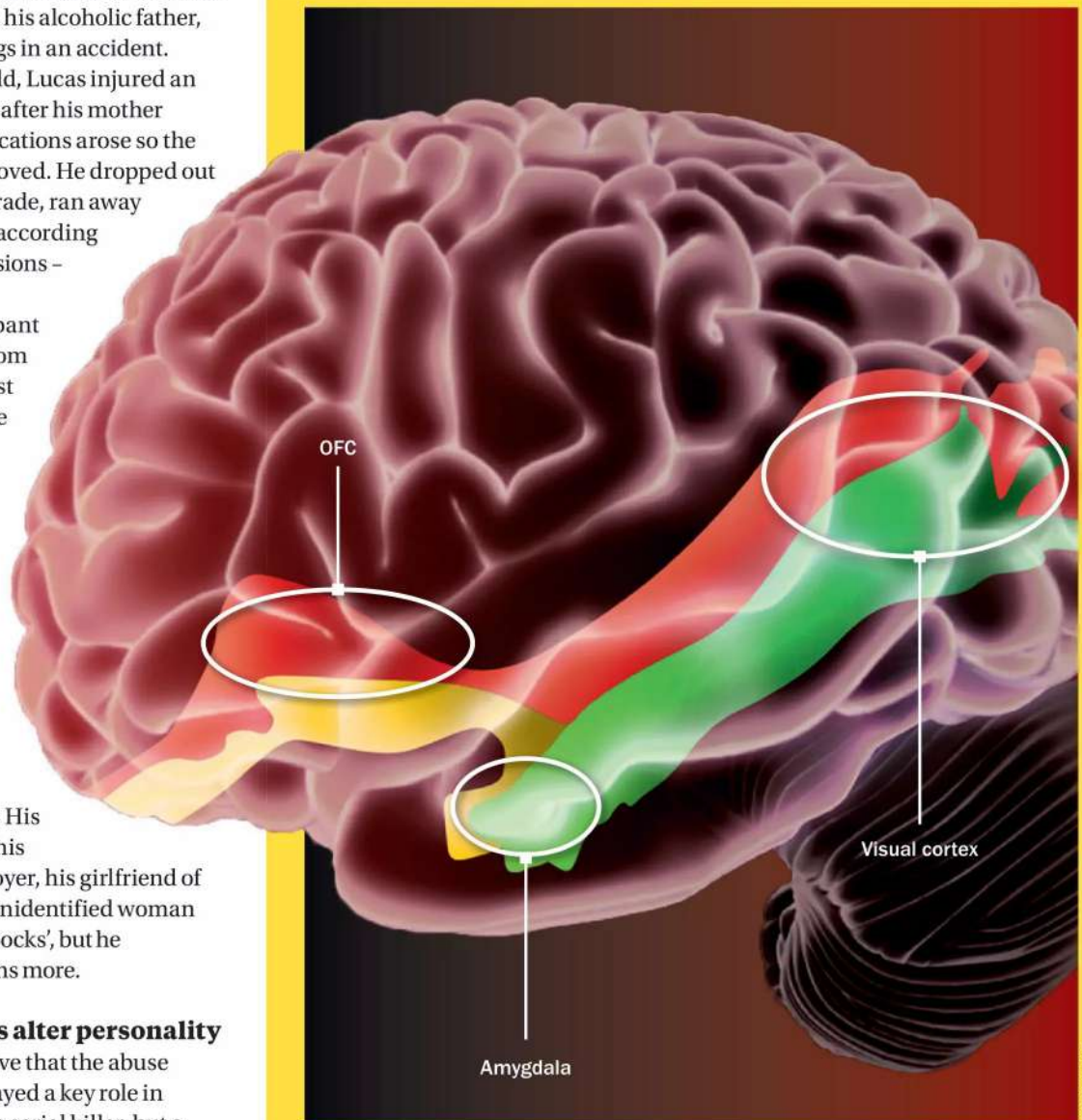
■ BRAIN FACTS

Weak brain connections lead to character abnormalities

Brain scans show that psychopaths have reduced structural integrity in the white matter fibres that connect the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) to the amygdala and the visual cortex in the occipital lobe at the rear of the brain. Other studies reveal that if the connection between these regions is damaged, the subject loses part of their ability to interpret visual impressions involving emotions. This includes,

for example, faces that express fear, depression or surprise, which are particularly difficult for psychopaths to recognise. These weak connections may be part of the explanation for psychopaths' contradictory nature.

Psychopaths suffer from weakened white matter fibres, which form pathways (red, yellow and green) between three of the brain's centres.



Mirror neurons trigger responses to other people's pain

Serial killers might understand other people's pain, but they don't care about it.

Mirror neurons are probably the cause of our ability to empathise with other people's feelings. At the sight of – for example – a man striking his fingers with a hammer, the viewer's mirror neurons are activated, which send nerve impulses directly to their hand. Although the impulses aren't always strong enough for the observer's hand to flinch, the muscle activity is detected by the brain, which perceives the victim's experience.

In 2008, a Canadian study investigated whether psychopaths' lack of compassion is due to defects in their mirror neurons. It evaluated 18 ordinary men using a checklist to diagnose psychopathy. Using the criteria related to empathy, subjects were ranked from a very empathetic individual with a 'heartlessness' score of 29 to a more heartless man (score 62). The subjects then watched some video clips where they saw a needle

being inserted into a hand, while the researchers measured the muscle activity in the viewers' hands.

This muscle activity is controlled by the mirror neurons, and the experiment revealed that the less empathetic the subject was, the more the mirror neurons were activated. The experiment therefore suggests that people with high 'heartlessness' scores – who therefore look like psychopaths – are better at understanding the pain of others than ordinary, compassionate people. This supports another experiment that states that it's not that psychopaths can't necessarily distinguish right from wrong, but that they simply don't care.

Looking at either image A – where no one feels pain – triggers no reaction but looking at the B images activate the mirror neurons. The greatest activation occurs when the hand is pricked by a needle.



in increasing the risk of them turning into a serial killer.

The MAOA gene is an enzyme that breaks down the neurotransmitters related to norepinephrine: serotonin, dopamine and adrenaline. A congenital mutation can partially disable the gene, which increases production of the three neurotransmitters, and if the mutation is combined with abuse or neglect in childhood, it can increase the risk of violent and psychopathic behaviour later in life. Thus, a 2002 US study showed that the unfortunate combination of gene mutation and childhood abuse tripled the risk of someone ending up convicted for an aggravated violent crime.

In addition, several serial killers have been shown to have the mutated MAOA gene, and the majority were also subjected to childhood neglect. The importance of the MAOA gene also explains why over 90 percent of all

serial killers are men. The gene is located on the X chromosome, of which men have only one, whereas women have two copies. A single mutation is therefore sufficient to place men in the danger zone, whereas women must be affected twice, which is much rarer.

The MAOA gene has been dubbed the 'serial killer gene', and the same term has also been applied to the CDH13 gene. CDH13 plays a role in helping the brain's nerve cells form connections with each other and thus create the correct network of neural pathways. Mutations in the gene have previously been shown to increase the risk of disorders such as ADHD, depression and substance abuse, and in 2015, Finnish researchers noted that the mutation is also associated with extremely violent crime.

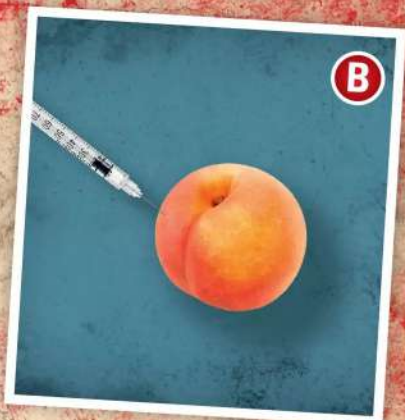
The researchers performed genetic analysis on 114 convicted murderers, and found that the more murders the

criminals had committed, the greater the likelihood that they possessed a mutated form of the either the CDH13 or MAOA gene. A combination of both mutated genes occurred 13 times more often among serial killers who'd committed at least ten murders as it did among those who'd only killed one or two other people.

The brain craves more killing

In many other cases, scientists have discovered a huge difference when examining the brains of regular murderers compared to that of serial killers. Although there are individual variations, the two types of killer have some characteristic brain abnormalities that either predispose them to stop after the first murder or carry on killing again and again.

One difference lies in the frontal lobes, which are responsible for advanced human abilities such as



controls basic emotions and regulates sexual and aggressive behaviour. If the activity here is elevated, negative experiences such as rejections and disappointments are often translated into anger and extroverted reactions. This is the case with the ordinary killer, who often becomes a predator in the heat of the moment, acting in an instant of extreme rage. Conversely, the serial killer usually has normal activity in the amygdala, so kills in cold blood.

The third major difference between killers and serial killers is found in three connected areas at the front of the brain. These areas are activated when someone needs to make a moral choice, where their ethical boundaries are challenged, or when they assess the consequences of their own actions.

Such considerations might – for example – include whether to throw an unknown person overboard to make room for your friend in a lifeboat, or whether to go out with friends after promising your family you'd stay home.

Here, serial killers differ from normal people – and regular murderers – because these areas don't function as they should. The result is that the serial killer feels they've done nothing wrong, so is neither troubled by pity for their victims nor remorse for their murders. In the case of the ordinary killer, these areas function fairly normally, so they are typically affected by guilt and regret about their actions after the murder.

Killing for sexual gratification

Genetic mutations and childhood abuse are not the only things that can shape a serial killer's brain. Congenital injuries to the brain or those that occur throughout life because of accidents or illness

also play a large part. A Swedish-British study from 2014 shows that among 239 serial killers across several different countries, 28 percent suffered from autism, while 21 percent had been subjected to a violent blow or other trauma to the head.

One of the serial killers that the study highlighted was Andrei Chikatilo from the former Soviet Union. He was born with water on the brain, which damaged parts of the organ, making him impotent and unable to control his bladder. As a boy, he was an obvious target for bullies, while his mother mocked him for his disabilities. As a child during World War II,

Chikatilo also experienced several horrific incidents, and when his father was captured by the Nazis, the entire family was treated with contempt by its neighbours.

All this made the young man extremely shy, and he struggled to form friendships. This was especially true of relationships with women, but Chikatilo did marry and subsequently start a family.

Shortly thereafter, however, he began sexually abusing children and young girls. At the age of 42, things went horribly awry during his attempted rape of a nine-year-old girl. His congenital brain injury prevented an erection, and in frustration he killed the girl by suffocating and stabbing her – a horrific act that led to ejaculation.

Three years later – in 1981 – the episode repeated itself. He tried to rape a 17-year-old girl, but again could not get an erection. Then he recalled how he had nevertheless managed to »»

Murderers

only become killers at the point the crime is committed, while serial killers murder in cold blood.

SHUTTERSTOCK

judgment, self-control and problem solving. This is where a dampener is put on impulsive reactions such as eating a colleague's packed lunch because you're hungry, and the area is also responsible for investigating alternative solutions to your problems rather than acting on your first instincts.

In the average killer, however, this part of the brain is often smaller than normal – this makes them react impulsively, take numerous risks, and struggle to control themselves. As a result, ordinary murders aren't usually premeditated or well planned.

In contrast, a serial killer's frontal lobes often function completely normally or may even be larger than normal. They therefore plan their murders carefully and execute them in a well-thought-out way. Another marked difference between the brains of the two types of killer can be found in the amygdala, which

As children, serial killers often torture smaller animals, such as cats and birds.

SHUTTERSTOCK



SHUTTERSTOCK



Child abuse can cause damage that means that the child develops abnormally.

obtain sexual gratification from his first rape. Chikatilo therefore began to beat the girl before strangling her, after which he mutilated the body with his teeth.

Six months later, a young teenage girl suffered the same fate, and then the murders took off. Over the following three months, he killed five more girls between the ages of nine and 18, after which the killings continued almost non-stop. When he was finally arrested and received his death sentence in 1992, Andrei Chikatilo pleaded guilty to 53 brutal murders of young women and men, as well as children, some as young as seven years old.

Fantasies control behaviour

Several psychologists and other researchers have argued that the deviant brain makes it difficult for potential serial killers to find ways of establishing healthy social relationships with other people.

Instead, these individuals begin to fantasise about having power over others and control over situations. Eventually, these fantasies become so important in giving life meaning that the future serial killer becomes dependent on them in order to exist. Italian sociologist Nicola Malizia described in 2017 how these fantasies

gradually become the driving force that can turn an abused child into a brutal serial killer later on in life.

The fantasies are often about exploiting other people and manipulating them, like chess pieces, to 'win the game'. Very often, they feature a sexual aspect, so that they trigger an intense release, and over time, the fantasies grow so large that the owner can no longer withstand the temptation to bring them to life.

At first, it may manifest in torturing and harassing animals, but in the end, the fantasies require a human for fulfilment. Once the decision has been made, it is vital that the victim is chosen carefully so their gender, age, appearance and so on closely match the killer's fantasy. Then the aspiring serial killer will attempt to stage a sequence of events that matches their lurid imagination.

It might, for example, involve taking a victim to a remote forest, attempting some form of courteous behaviour, then reacting with cold contempt after a rejection before carrying out punishment in the form of sexual assault, then finally killing the victim in a very specific way. All to achieve the same feelings of liberation and enjoyment previously only experienced in the killer's fevered imagination.

After the first murder, according to Malizia, there comes a period in which the killer gains satisfaction from

reminiscing about the episode and building on the murder in their mind. However, in the end, it's not enough to satisfy them, and so they're felt drawn to commit another murder. Thus, they become a serial killer who gradually develops increasingly perverse sexual fantasies and commits even more bestial murders to achieve release.

Develops signature

Future murders become a ritual that should preferably be performed in the same way every time, so the serial killer develops patterns that become their personal 'tag' or signature.

The signature isn't purely associated with choosing the victim, the crime scene and the method of killing, but can also be associated with specific

“Contrary to popular belief, serial killers span all racial groups”

US Department of Justice pamphlet.

rituals, such as raping the dead body or cutting off its genitals.

Over the years, several psychologists, criminologists and other professionals have tried to organise serial killers into specific categories to explain their motivation for committing so many murders. One of the most recognised methods of categorising serial killers was presented in the 1980s by US coroner Ronald Holmes, who performed autopsies on several victims.

One of Holmes's categories includes serial killers who experience a sadistic joy in torturing and murdering their victims. It's often the only way they can achieve sexual gratification, and they often draw out the experience to achieve maximum gratification.

In many cases, killers in this group take a trophy from the victim, so they're able to relive the murder for a period to

5,000 are estimated to become the victims of an average of 35 serial killers in the US every single year.

remain sexually satisfied. Another category covers those who enjoy controlling their victims and having power over them. They often stalk and pursue the victim for extended periods and use cunning to trap them.

Serial killer Ted Bundy targeted and raped both girls and young women, but most psychologists don't believe that sex was his primary motivation for murder. Bundy always made a big deal of behaving politely and gallantly towards the women, so that he could lure them into a carefully prepared trap. For these serial killers, the murder itself is not so much about the act of killing, but rather about the pursuit of their victims and demonstrating their ultimate control and power over them.

In addition, according to Holmes, there are serial killers who are driven by delusions and hallucinations. They may hear voices ordering them to kill, or they strike in an act of self-defence against their unsuspecting victims, because the psychotic serial killer feels persecuted or

threatened by them. Other serial killers are simple assassins for hire who will kill anyone if the price is right.

Murder through 'compassion'

Finally, there is a category of serial killers who, in a form of misconstrued pity and compassion, kill old or seriously ill people to 'free' them from their perceived suffering.

The victims may also be orphans or disabled children who the perpetrator does not believe have dignified lives. This category contains the highest proportion of female serial killers, and the murder is most often carried out by suffocation or drug overdose. One of these so-called angels of death was male

security guard Joan Vila Dilme, who worked in a Spanish nursing home. He felt that residents led a wretched existence and wanted to put them out of their misery, so during the period 2009-2010, he killed 11 residents, the youngest of whom was 80 years old. Most of the victims weren't dying and had a reasonable quality of life, but Dilme knew better.

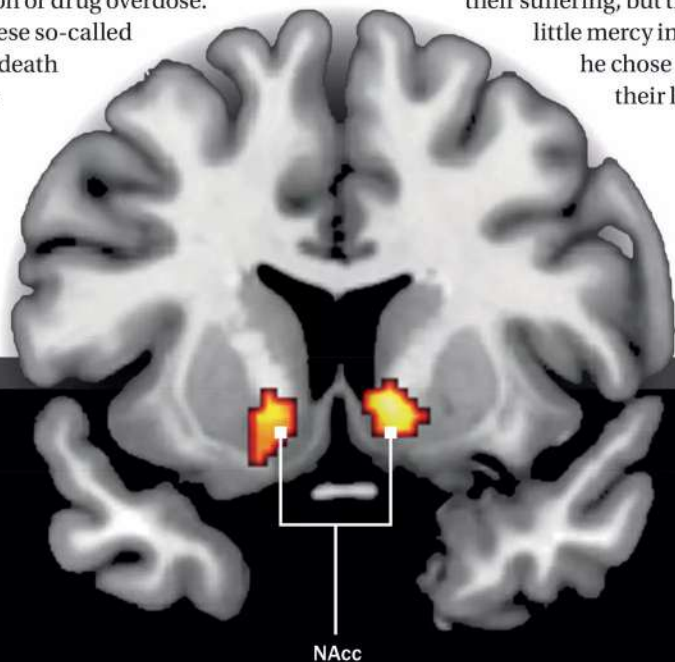
His victims suffered violent and painful deaths when he gave them an overdose of insulin or psychotropic drugs, or even forced them to drink bleach. Dilme may have freed the elderly from what he perceived to be their suffering, but there was little mercy in the way he chose to end their lives. ■

■ BRAIN FACTS

Rewards outweigh the consequences

Psychopaths' brains are designed to be rewarded with a shot of positive dopamine when they perform impulsive actions without thinking about the consequences first.

Impulsivity is controlled from the brain region 'NAcc', which secretes dopamine when faced with performing an impulsive action. US researcher Joshua Buckholz has shown that the more "impulsive-antisocial" and thus psychopathic a subject is, the more active NAcc is, and the more dopamine it secretes when that person has an opportunity to 'win' in a risky venture.



BRAIN IN PSYCHOPATHS





MURDERPEDIA

VOLKER ECKERT

"The Lorry Killer"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARK:** Was obsessed with female hair
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 6-12
- **MURDER METHOD:** Strangulation
- **LOCATION:** France, Spain, Germany, Czech Republic
- **STATUS:** Committed suicide in his cell in Bayreuth, Germany, July 2007

Fascination with hair led to murder

1974 In the German town of Plauen, a boy was playing with his sister's doll. He treated it well, especially its hair, which was long and beautiful. One day he began rubbing himself against his mattress with the doll in his hand. That was when Volker Eckert had the first orgasm of his life. Before long, his new-found fetish would make him kill.



The interrogation had been going on for an hour when the suspect complained of a severe headache. He claimed that he needed medication from the cab of his lorry. A young officer was dispatched to fetch it. It was a cold November night, and the officer was unhappy at being forced outside, but his irritation vanished when he looked into the well beside the driver's seat. Three Polaroid photos were lying there. Three snaps of naked women. Strangled naked women. And on the back of each photo, the perpetrator had described in meticulous detail how he had taken the victim's life.

For 30 years, Volker Eckert had committed murders throughout Europe without being detected, but that evening in Cologne in 2006, he seems to have decided to end his killing spree. By sending the police out to fetch his pills, he handed them the key to hundreds of pieces of evidence that could be used to convict him. The lorry was a chamber

of horrors, filled with pictures, locks of hair and other trophies from his long series of murders. When Eckert was confronted with the macabre findings, he began to confess his bloody crimes.

Sister's doll was first victim

Bit by bit, over the following months, police investigators and psychiatrist Norbert Nedopil gained insight into Volker Eckert's gruesome story. It began in 1959 in the small town of Plauen in East Germany, where Eckert grew up in the home he shared with his mother and father, along with his little sister and brother. As a child, he secretly enjoyed playing with his sister's dolls. He was enchanted by their long, soft hair, which he ran through his fingers. It felt wonderful. One day, he was kneeling by his bed, playing with a doll, fixated as always by its hair, when

6 murders were confessed to by Volker Eckert, but the police investigation revealed that he committed at least 12.

he began to rub his crotch against the side of the bed. He rubbed more and more, and soon, for the first time, an orgasm coursed through his body.

From that day on, Volker was obsessed. All his thoughts were about hair, but he was determined that no one should ever discover his secret.

After a few years of playing with dolls and an old wig he had found in the attic of the family apartment, the urge to feel long hair between his fingers was stronger than ever. Eckert wanted more. He wanted to feel real, human hair.

At school, his desk was behind the beautiful Silvia Unterdörfel, whose long, fair hair reached down her back. It was too much for Eckert; he became so preoccupied with Unterdörfel's hair that he couldn't eat or sleep. He had to touch that hair! And in Eckert's disturbed mind, there was only one way it could be done. At the age of just 14, he was planning his first murder.

The Unterdörfel and Eckert families lived in the same building, which had a long communal loft space above the apartments' entrance ways. On 7th May 1974, Eckert went through the attic and down the staircase leading to the Unterdörfels' home, and rang his classmate's doorbell. Silvia opened the door and invited Eckert inside. On discovering Silvia was alone, Eckert carried out the plan he had secretly practised so many times on the doll in his room: he grabbed Silvia's neck, pressed his thumbs with all his might against her trachea, and only let go when Silvia's body became limp. Eckert let her fall to the floor, then filled with pleasure, he began to play with her hair. His dream had come true.

After a few minutes, however, Silvia started to move. She was still alive! Terrified that his secret fetish would be revealed, Eckert took a clothes line, wrapped it around Silvia's neck, and pulled. Once he was certain she was dead, he hooked the line around a door handle and pulled so that her neck lifted slightly up from the floor, then he tied a knot around the handle. In the teenager's twisted mind, it now >>>

■ CRIMINAL PAST

Imprisoned several times

Eckert had already been jailed for assault before the truth about his lorry trips came to light.

Volker Eckert had already been in prison three times when he confessed to committing a series of murders to police in 2006. None of his previous prison stays, however, had stopped him from re-offending once he was released.

He was first arrested in 1974, after he committed his first murder as a teenager, but his arrest wasn't a result of that crime: Eckert had reacted angrily to his parents' separation by stealing his mother's car. He was sent down for 18 months for the offence.

Four years later, Eckert was once again detained by police. This time he had tried to strangle a woman in his home town of Plauen. Eckert

was sentenced to two years and eight months, but was released the following year. Once free, Eckert continued to attack women in Plauen. In 1987, he was captured again. This time he got 12 years, but only served six.



MURDERPEDIA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Eckert was no stranger to prison life when he was finally arrested for murder.



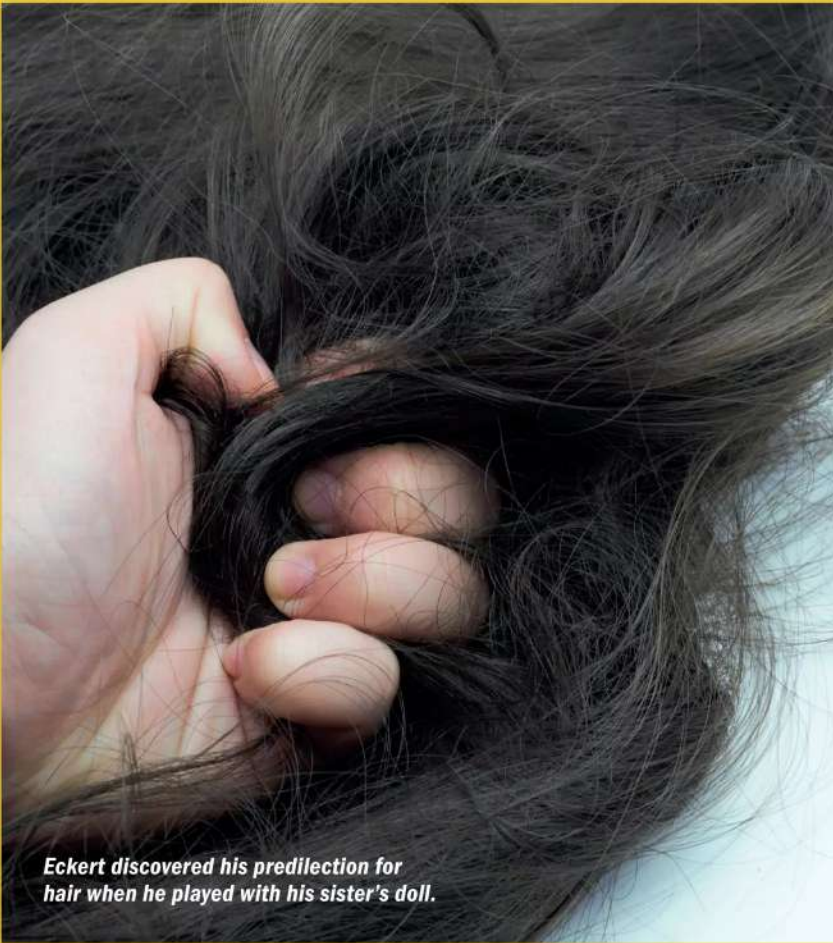
Eckert was captured in 2006 thanks to a surveillance camera in Spain.

■ FETISH

Serial killer found hair irresistible

Eckert's fetish turned into an evil obsession.

People who become sexually aroused by hair, like Volker Eckert, are called trichophiles – 'tricho' coming from the ancient Greek for hair. As with the vast majority of fetishes, trichophilia is usually harmless, but in extreme cases can develop into a troubled obsession. Like Eckert, most trichophiles become preoccupied with hair as children. However, what draws trichophiles to hair can vary. Some are attracted by a particular colour, others by a certain length or hairstyle. Trichophilia is found among both men and women. For Volker Eckert, sexual obsession arose early on. He experienced his first orgasm while touching a doll's hair, which affected him for the rest of his life.



Eckert discovered his predilection for hair when he played with his sister's doll.

looked as though Silvia had hanged herself, rather than been murdered. Volker slipped unnoticed out of the Unterdörfel apartment and returned home via the loft.

The crime could have been both the beginning and the end of Eckert's killing career. The teenager had planned the crime to the best of his

ability, but he could easily have been detected. An autopsy would have revealed marks left by his thumbs on her neck, which would have ruled out suicide. And while forensic scientists did not test for DNA at the time, Eckert would have left plenty of physical traces at the crime scene in the struggle that broke out when he began to choke Silvia

– not to mention the overturned furniture in the entrance way. Witness interviews might also have led police to the outsider in Silvia's classroom. But by chance, Eckert escaped prosecution.

Silvia's stepfather, a member of the Deutsche Volkspolizei, the East German police force, was convinced that Silvia didn't commit suicide. But

He stalked women for decades

Eckert got away with his first murder as a 14-year-old. It took over 30 years for the serial killer to be caught.

1974

**Silvia
Unterdörfel**

7th May: A young Eckert kills his classmate, Silvia, in order to play with her long, fair hair.

2001

**Sandra
Osifo**

21st June: Eckert picks up a Nigerian prostitute by the side of the road and kills her.

2001

**Isabel
Beatriz Díaz**

August: The 24-year-old Spaniard fights in vain to stop Eckert from choking her.

2002

**Benedicta
Edwards**

August: Eckert never admits killing the 23-year-old, but plenty of evidence points to him.



when his colleagues saw the girl hanging from the door handle, they immediately accepted the conclusion that Eckert's primitive staging was intended to suggest. No one knows why the police were so quick to conclude that Silvia had committed suicide, and the police report from the East German archives no longer exists. One thing is certain, however: Volker Eckert had succeeded in getting away with his first murder – and the true story of Silvia Unterdörfel's death would only come to light 30 years and many murders later, when her killer described the murder to the psychiatrist Nedopil.

Imprisoned for assault

Eckert never told his psychiatrist how he relieved his lusts in the years following Silvia's murder. Instead, he recounted a chaotic period during which his parents' divorce affected him greatly. In 1978, he got a job as a house painter in his stepfather's company. Eckert spent his evenings wandering the dark streets of his home town, seeking out women to assault. He attacked an unknown number without being detected, but was finally discovered one evening while trying to strangle a young woman in the street. Police caught him in the act, and this time Eckert was convicted. He was sentenced to two years and eight months for attempted rape, but was released after just one year.

As a convicted would-be rapist, Eckert thought that the police would suspect him if any rape-related crimes happened in Plauen. He therefore tried to suppress his bestial needs for a

while. In a way, he was helped by the death of his parents. After both his mother and father died within days of each other, Eckert became a surrogate father to his two younger siblings. He later told Nedopil that caring for them was the only worthwhile thing he had accomplished in his life.

But after a while, his siblings moved in with an aunt. With that responsibility

“He knew he was an outsider. He was suffering from this”

Volker Eckert's lawyer about his client.

gone, Eckert's base desires came to the fore once more. He started hunting the dark streets of Plauen, attacking lone females, just as he had before his parents had died. He choked them with his hands or a rope until they no longer resisted. Then he dragged them away and raped them. Afterwards, he would leave them unconscious on the street, in a ditch, in the woods, or wherever he had taken them.

Under the police radar

For the first eight years of the 1980s, Eckert stalked the streets of Plauen. He assaulted around 30 women, all of whom – almost miraculously – survived. Eckert carried physical traces of his crimes, and many of his victims offered descriptions of the perpetrator,

but not once was Eckert questioned by the police. During this time, another assailant was at large in the city. The police assumed that there was only one man behind all the crimes, and that man wasn't Eckert. However, the crimes continued even after the other assailant was jailed. Then, one night, two women, each of whom had barely survived being strangled, gave detailed descriptions of their perpetrator, and the police finally picked up Eckert.

The double assault resulted in a 12-year sentence for Eckert. After six years, however, a prison psychologist claimed that Eckert was no longer a danger to society. In 1994, Eckert was released. He immediately saw new possibilities. When he began serving his sentence, he was still a citizen of the German Democratic Republic, with all the restrictions on movement that it entailed. But with the reunification of East and West Germany, the whole of Europe was open to him. He could travel wherever he wanted, and Eckert began training to become a long-distance lorry driver, with the sole intention of making the continent his hunting ground.

From his new home in the German town of Hof, near the Czech border, Eckert began driving exports to Eastern Europe. Along the roads of the Czech Republic, rows of prostitutes waited for German customers, and here Eckert could operate in complete anonymity. That he could get away with his

Prostitutes who worked rest areas for long-distance lorry drivers were easy prey for Eckert.

2004

Ahhiobe Gali

September: Eckert kills the Ghanaian prostitute in Rezzato, Italy.

2005

Mariy Veselova

February: The Russian Veselova is found near Girona, Catalonia. Eckert killed her.

2006

Agnieszka Bos

October: Eckert picks up the Pole near Reims; 13 minutes later, she is dead.

2006

Miglena Petrova

November: His lorry is caught on CCTV as he tries to dump the body. It's his last murder.



PEGGY MARCO/PIXARBY GETTY IMAGES, IMAGESELECT OG SHUTTERSTOCK

crimes in the relatively small town of Plauen was pure luck, but on a main road, no one knows anyone. The prostitutes asked no questions and willingly climbed into Eckert's cab without him having to strangle them first. The assault could wait until they were lying in the lorry's bunk, where no one could hear their screams for help.

No one missed his victims

When Eckert confessed his crimes to the police in 2006, he didn't talk about his attacks in the Czech Republic. Later, however, investigators found evidence in his lorry that linked him to the murders of two Czech prostitutes in the mid-1990s. In the years that followed, he worked on routes around Western Europe, and one evening in June 2001, he was on his way home from Spain when he made a stop in Bordeaux, France. There he saw the young prostitute Sandra Osifo, who had come to France from Nigeria. Eckert fell for Osifo's long hair and invited her inside the lorry.

In the cab, Osifo agreed to have her hands tied behind her back to gratify a sexual fantasy, but then Eckert grabbed her by the throat. He squeezed with both hands – just like he had at his neighbour's so many years ago. But this time, Eckert did not let go. He continued choking Osifo long after she had stopped struggling. He wanted to

make sure she was dead before taking her into the woods. Two days later, French police found Sandra Osifo's undressed body on the forest floor. The prostitute was lying on her stomach

*“I am so crazy
that I am relieved
by the arrest”*

Volker Eckert after being caught.

with her legs slightly spread. The perpetrator had cut a lock of her hair – or rather her wig, because the long hair wasn't real. The police searched the site for forensic evidence, but achieved little else – just as Eckert had hoped.

He had decided to target foreign, roadside prostitutes because he knew that it would be difficult for the police to investigate such crimes. The victims' families were far away, and their acquaintances were mostly criminals who had no interest in helping law officers. Osifo's pimp could easily find new women from Africa, Russia or Eastern Europe, so he wasn't unduly concerned if one of his prostitutes disappeared now and again.

Osifo's death became yet another unsolved murder. The number of prostitutes killed without any perpetrator being brought to justice has grown at an alarming rate in recent times. On the stretch of the European Route E45 that runs from Innsbruck in

Austria to Bologna in Italy – a distance of about 400 kilometres – there are 45 such unsolved murders, and things are just as bad elsewhere in Europe. The criminals are helped by the fact that they have free movement across the continent, while national police agencies' powers end at their borders. The police authorities across Europe barely cooperate with one another, which means they often miss patterns in crimes committed in different countries and thus fail to identify murderers like Eckert.

Unable to control his lust

A few months later, Eckert struck again. This time he stopped at the seaside resort of Lloret de Mar, north of Barcelona, and picked up the 24-year-old prostitute Isabel Beatriz Díaz. When Díaz discovered what Eckert had in mind, she fought with all her might, but even though Eckert was neither particularly big nor strong, she couldn't prise his hands off her throat. After having sex with the body and taking his trophies – a photo and a lock of her long, blonde hair – Eckert once again hid his naked victim in the bushes.

When the police found Díaz two months later, she had not even been reported missing and the investigation was quickly completed.

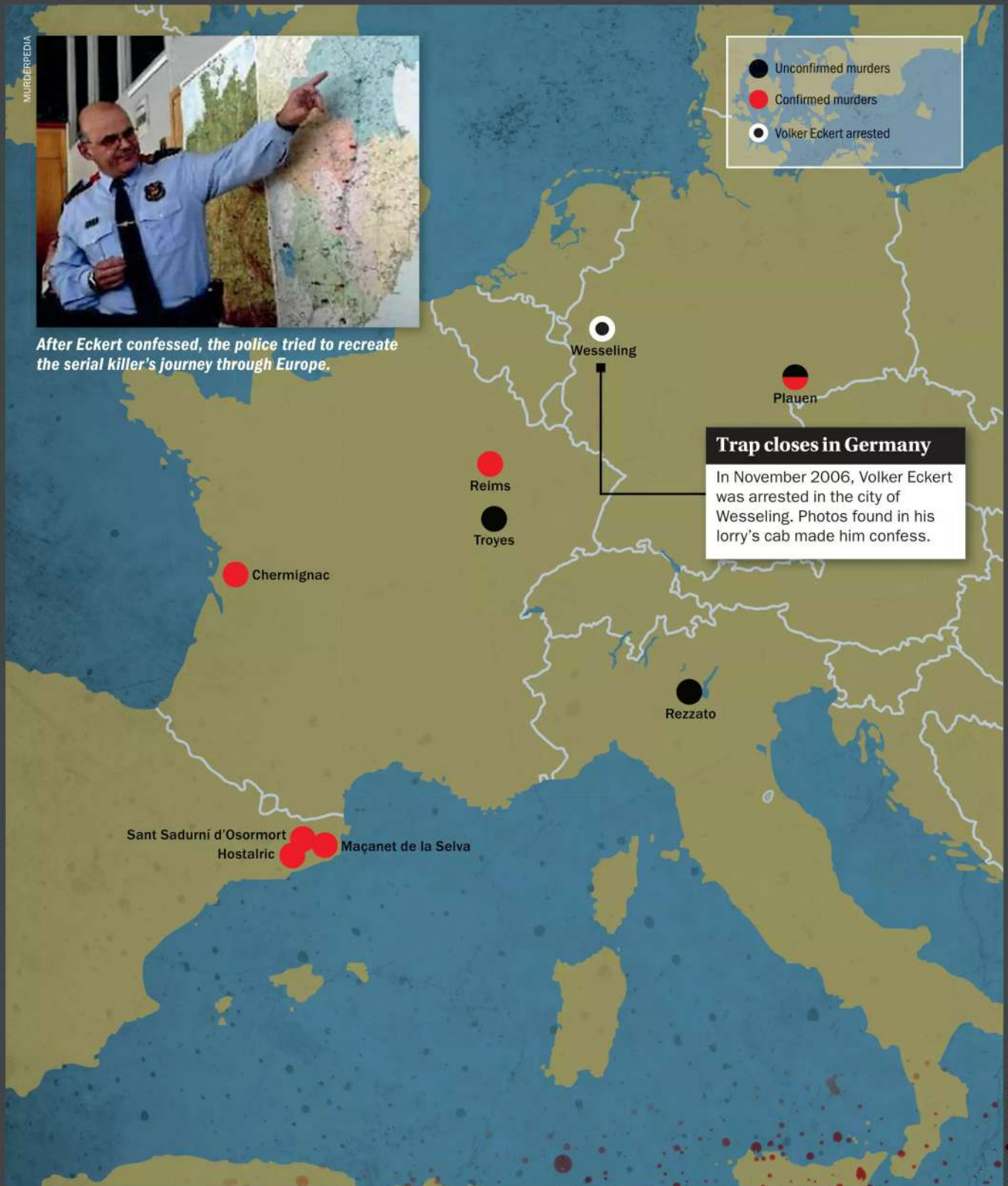
In the presence of police and the psychiatrist Nedopil, Eckert confessed to three more murders: a Russian prostitute whom he strangled in northern Spain in the spring of 2005, and two women whom he murdered »»

His job as a lorry driver provided good cover for Eckert. He was anonymous as he drove across the continent.



Eckert murdered throughout Europe

Volker Eckert killed at least five young prostitutes during his time as a lorry driver. Police have subsequently identified other murders that Eckert is believed to have committed.



■ BUREAUCRATIC FAILINGS

Lack of cooperation helped the killer

For years, Volker Eckert drove his lorry undetected along Europe's motorways with corpses on board. Bureaucracy and national borders hampered the investigation.

As a serial killer, Volker Eckert took advantage of one thing in particular: a lack of police cooperation across national borders. When Eckert drove from one European country to another, he became difficult to catch – much to the frustration of the authorities.

The bureaucratic challenges were clear when police began investigating Eckert's crimes after the killer's arrest in 2006. First, the Spanish and German authorities fought over who should actually lead the work. The victim, Miglena Petrova, was found in Spain, but Volker Eckert was a German citizen. But even when the Germans were finally given responsibility for the investigation, internal problems arose. The homicide department, which would normally deal with such a case, was too busy, so the case instead ended up with OKD, the department that dealt with organised crime.

OKD set about tracing Eckert's earlier movements around Europe and cross-checking data with unsolved murder cases. However, the police frequently encountered resistance,



PERE DURAN

Petrova's body was recovered from the spot where Eckert dumped it in Hostalric, Spain.

with several countries barely bothering to help. The UK, for example, only sent information about a single unsolved murder case – which Eckert turned out not to be behind. On the other hand, Spain eagerly supported the

investigation and sent Catalanian officers to Germany to help interrogate Eckert. But if national police forces had been better equipped to exchange information about the killings, Eckert might have been caught much earlier.

in the autumn of 2006, the Polish prostitute Agnieszka Bos and the 20-year-old Bulgarian Miglena Petrova, whom he killed in Spain. Data from the tachograph and GPS in Eckert's lorry showed that it only took 13 minutes from the time he picked up Agnieszka Bos outside Reims in France until he disposed of her naked body at the

remote spot where she was later found. While police put the murder of Bos down to a clash within a Bulgarian prostitution ring, Eckert was at home in his apartment with a blow-up doll dressed in Bos's clothes, and with her lock of hair attached to its rubber head.

Eckert seemed untouched when he described his gruesome acts, although

he referred to himself in the third person during his accounts.

In conversations with Nedopil, he explained that the desire to choke a woman and then satisfy himself sexually with her corpse was a feeling that would rise up in him and that he could do nothing against – as if something alien had taken power over

IMAGE SELECT



Volker Eckert assaulted around 30 women in his home town of Plauen in East Germany.

him and caused him to perform the monstrous acts.

Perhaps the murder of 20-year-old Miglena Petrova was the final showdown between Eckert and his inner demon. The process began exactly like all the other cases: Eckert was on his way through northern Spain looking for a victim. He found Petrova, who was a waitress at a local bar. She had the physical characteristic that all of Eckert's victims shared: long hair. The two ended up in Eckert's lorry, where he strangled her with a rope.

With the body still lying in the bunk of his cab, Eckert drove to his destination and unloaded his cargo. Once that was done, he parked the lorry at a football stadium in a small town. There he waited for darkness so that he could dispose of Petrova's body.

Eckert dumped his other victims in wooded areas, but he tossed Petrova into a ditch right next to car park. Then he got back in his cab and drove home to Germany. Petrova's body was so poorly hidden that it was found the very next morning – and unlike in previous cases, a crucial clue quickly emerged.

Technicians had recently installed a video surveillance system at a factory next to the car park, and it didn't take the Spanish police long to look through the footage and spot Eckert's lorry. The company's logo and the lorry's number plate were both easily recognisable.

The police didn't know if Eckert was a possible witness or

the perpetrator, but they quickly contacted the German authorities and asked them to bring him in for questioning. On 17th November 2006, the German police arrested

Volker Eckert at his place of work outside Cologne. At first, Eckert claimed he had no knowledge of the incident in the car park, but then he sent police to the lorry for his pills.

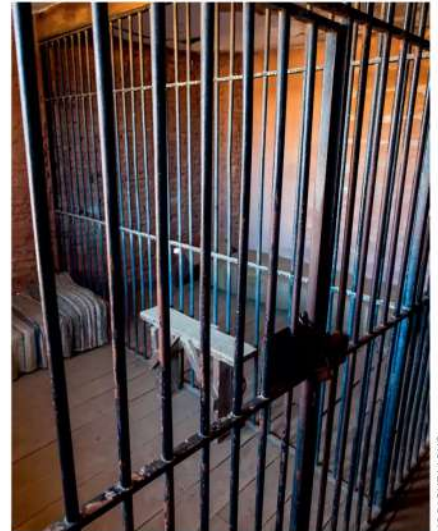
When the officer returned with the photos, Eckert revealed how he had committed six murders, describing each act in detail, but the numbers didn't stack up. In Eckert's lorry and apartment, the police found photos, descriptions, locks of hair and clothes that had to have come from far more than six murders. Confronted with the discrepancy, Eckert clammed up and refused to talk about any murders, including those he had already confessed to committing.

More clues than murders

After that, the police were forced to piece the case together themselves. It was a time-consuming process because they had to search through unsolved murder cases from several countries and map Eckert's movements in the years leading up to his arrest using GPS data, tachographs, bills of lading and account movements.

After a few months, German investigators concluded that in addition to the six murders he had admitted, Eckert must have been behind seven others: one murder in Plauen in 1987, one in France in 2002, one in Italy in 2004, three in the Czech Republic and another in France. The last four were

400 km is the length of European Route 45, which has as many as 45 unsolved murders.



SHUTTERSTOCK

The serial killer hanged himself in July 2007 before his trial could begin.

difficult to date, as the bodies were only discovered long after the crimes.

With 13 murders to his name, Eckert was one of the worst serial killers Germany had known in recent times. The prosecution was preparing a long, technically heavy trial, but it came to nothing in the end.

On 1st July 2007, Eckert turned 48. The newspapers were full of the "Brummi-Mörder" (Lorry Killer) and their descriptions of Eckert's repugnant acts had caused his last lifeline – his little sister – to sever all contact. When evening came, Eckert was left alone in his cell. The following morning, he was dead. Eckert hanged himself. He never answered for his crimes in court.

DNA has since shown that the 1987 Plauen murder was committed by someone else, so in all probability the German lorry driver killed 12 women. But with so many unsolved murders of prostitutes along Europe's roads, the figure may well be higher. ■





MURDERPEDIA

JEFFREY DAHMER

"The Milwaukee Monster"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARKS:** Rape, dissection, necrophilia and cannibalism
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 17
- **MURDER METHODS:** Strangulation, beheading
- **LOCATION:** Ohio and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA
- **STATUS:** Sentenced in 1992 to 16 life sentences. Murdered in prison in 1994.



Milwaukee Monster was obsessed with the human body

1991 Jeffrey Dahmer was no ordinary child. He loved picking up dead animals from the road and examining their anatomy. The boy kept the body parts of cattle in jars. As an adult, Dahmer felt an increasing sexual urge to study the human body up close – to take it apart, taste it and store it in his apartment. His morbid sex drive cost 17 boys and men their lives.



Police officers Robert Rauth and Rolf Mueller had been having a quiet evening. It was 23.30 on Monday 22nd July 1991 and the pair of law enforcers only had half an hour left of their shift as they drove down North 25th Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Suddenly, a slender man with his shirt unbuttoned ran towards the patrol car. A set of handcuffs dangled from one of his wrists, which he asked the officers to unlock. Rauth and Mueller had a hard time following the frantic flow of words, but apparently a “freak” had tried to kill the frightened man, who after a while introduced himself as Tracy Edwards.

The officers asked Edwards to guide them to where the assault had taken place, and soon the trio was standing in front of number 213 of the Oxford Apartments complex.

Several locks were released from inside, and a young man with blond hair, a dishevelled moustache and large

glasses opened the door and introduced himself as Jeffrey Dahmer. At first, he seemed calm and accommodating, but when the officers asked to go inside, Dahmer became panicked and violent. Rauth and Mueller had to work together to get the 1.8-metre-tall man on the ground and handcuff him.

Once Dahmer was pacified on the floor, the officers began to look around the apartment. Dotted about the living room were bizarre photographs of bound men, either alive or newly killed. Other images showed male bodies undergoing various forms of dissection and bloody mutilation.

A rotten stench hung in the air, and Mueller followed the smell to the fridge.

“Oh my God, there’s a goddamn head in here,” gasped the officer. He was right – a severed head with an open

mouth stared out from a fridge shelf at the policeman. The officers could barely imagine what atrocities must have taken place in the foul-smelling apartment. But the revelations about

Jeffrey Dahmer’s secret life would only grow even more gruesome – the police had unmasked one of history’s most barbaric serial killers. A necrophiliac murderer and cannibal, who would soon become known to the public as the “Milwaukee Monster”.

7 skulls and two skeletons that Dahmer had prepared were on a black cloth on a private altar in his living room.

Fascinated by death

In May 1960, 31 years before he was arrested in his reeking home in the Oxford Apartments, Jeffrey Dahmer was born in the town of West Allis, just outside Milwaukee. His was a typical American middle-class family; his father was a research chemist and his mother a housewife. Nothing indicated that little Jeff would develop into a cold-blooded serial killer.

“I don’t know why it started. I don’t have any definite answers on that myself,” Dahmer later explained.

According to his father, Lionel Dahmer, Jeffrey was fascinated by death from a very young age. On one occasion, Lionel discovered a dead animal under the family house, which his son found engrossing. By the age of ten, Jeffrey loved to dissect insects, birds and small mammals. The boy cycled around the roads near his home to find dead animals he could take home. Some of the carcasses he dissected and immersed in acid, to dissolve them. One day, Jeffrey placed a dog’s skull on a pole in the woods, then nailed the animal’s body to a tree.

At their home in Bath, Ohio, where the family had moved in 1968, his parents often argued and their marriage gradually fell apart. The quarrels took a heavy toll on Jeffrey, who withdrew ever more into himself. He became a loner, spending most of his time in the woods, or in the shed where he kept a jar of animal parts preserved in formaldehyde.

During his high school years, Jeffrey started drinking heavily. The other >>>

FAMOUS CANNIBAL ON FILM

Doctor dissected his lover

The fictional cannibal Hannibal Lecter in *The Silence of the Lambs* was inspired by a man from Mexico.

Probably the best-known cannibal in history is the fictional Hannibal Lecter – also called Hannibal the Cannibal. In the 1991 horror film *The Silence of the Lambs*, a young female FBI agent, Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster), works with the highly intelligent serial killer and cannibal, Lecter (Anthony Hopkins), to solve a heinous crime. In a famous line, an escaped Lecter tells Clarice that he is “having an old friend for dinner”. The film garnered five Oscars, but was not completely fictional – the character Hannibal Lecter was based on the gay Mexican doctor Alfredo Ballí Treviño, who in 1959 had been sentenced to death for cutting the throat of his friend and

lover, whom he then mutilated. Treviño was also suspected of killing and dismembering several hitchhikers. However, his sentence was subsequently commuted, and in 1981 Treviño was released. Until his death in 2009, he worked as a doctor among the poor.



In the film, the elusive Hannibal Lecter had “an old friend for dinner”.

TRIAL OF CANNIBAL

1. NAME - OCCUPATION
2. MARITAL STATUS/CHILDREN
AGES
3. SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION
4. AREA OF RESIDENCE
5. PRIOR JURY EXPERIENCE
6. REACH A VERDICT ?
7. VICTIM OR WITNESS ?
8. CRIMINAL JUSTICE CON-
TACTS
9. FRIENDS OR RELATIVES
IN LAW ENFORCEMENT
OR LAW ?
10. HOBBIES/OUTSIDE
INTERESTS

In court, Dahmer stated that the only thing he wanted was to disappear completely.

The cannibal liked good-looking boys and young men

A 13-year-old boy was abused by Dahmer but escaped. Three years later, his brother was murdered.



Police forensic scientists emptied Dahmer's apartment of evidence.



In court, Dahmer explained that he had purposefully gone after attractive men. The youngest of his victims was just 14 years old, the oldest 33. Two were lucky enough to escape – one was 13-year-old Keison Sinthasomphone, who was drugged and abused by Dahmer in 1988, but managed to escape before he was killed. Afterwards, he reported the assault to the police, and Dahmer was arrested, but in a horrific mishandling of the case, Dahmer was released on bail one week later. Three years later, in May 1991, Keison's younger brother, Konerak, paid the price: he was abused, tortured and killed by Dahmer. Like his brother, Konerak tried to flee, but without success.

Joseph Bradehoft (top) and Anthony Lee Sears were both strangled and mutilated. Bradehoft, father of three, was Dahmer's last victim, in 1991.

students in his class noticed that he smelled of alcohol and was drunk during lessons. Classmate Mike Kukral described how they'd started talking about his drinking when they were around 17. Dahmer drank anything he could get his hands on – beer, bourbon and whiskey. It wasn't just social drinking; he drank before, during and after school.

Lionel Dahmer worried about his son's excessive alcohol consumption, explaining that he came home drunk from high school. The drinking became worse and worse. His father tried to talk to him about the dangers, but it seemed he was too addicted, both physically and mentally.

Jeffrey graduated in 1978, but was burdened by personal anguish. The now 18-year-old man had become aware that he found men attractive, but the teenager knew no one in Bath who shared his desires. His sexual frustration grew – a frustration that would soon have fatal consequences.

Teenager became a murderer

One June night in 1978, Jeffrey Dahmer had been out drinking, which was far from unusual. His parents had gone away for the weekend, so he'd borrowed the car and was on his way home at 17.00, when he noticed a young man standing at the roadside, holding out his thumb.

"I had been having, for a couple of years ... fantasies of meeting a good-looking hitchhiker, and sexually enjoying him," Dahmer later said. He invited hitchhiker Steven Hicks home that night to smoke pot.

Hicks accepted. But while the two teenagers were drinking beer and smoking, it dawned on Dahmer that his guest wasn't gay and had no intention of fulfilling Dahmer's fantasy.

"I didn't know how else to keep him there other than to get the barbell and to hit him, over the head ... then [I] strangled him with the same barbell."

Immediately, Dahmer was appalled by his actions, but the teenager also felt sexually aroused by having complete control and power over his victim. With Steven Hicks lying dead in front of him, Dahmer masturbated before

carrying the body down to the crawl space beneath the house and going to bed.

The following day, the teenager bought a hunting knife, knowing he had to get rid of the evidence before his parents returned home. Using the

“I [got] the barbell and ... hit him over the head ... then [I] strangled him”

Jeffrey Dahmer about his first murder.

knife, he cut Steven Hicks's stomach open, and the mere sight of his intestines made him want to masturbate again. After satisfying himself, Dahmer set about cutting the body into smaller pieces, which he put in plastic bags and hid out of the way in a buried drainpipe outside the house. The 18-year-old Jeffrey had become a murderer and had frighteningly found pleasure in the act.

“That night in Ohio, that one impulsive night. Nothing's been normal since then. ... After it happened, I thought I'd just try to live as normally as possible and bury it, but things like

that don't stay buried,” Dahmer explained 13 years later.

Killer sedated young men

In December 1981, Dahmer moved into his grandmother's basement room in the Milwaukee suburb of West Allis. Since the murder of Steven Hicks three years earlier, Dahmer had been in the army, but was thrown out due to alcohol abuse. Now the 21-year-old tried to turn things around.

“I started going to church with my grandma ... read the Bible, tried to push out any sexual thoughts at all, and I was doing pretty well for two about years. ... But ... I started, the compulsion, the drive. Increased sexual desires. I started drinking again.”

Dahmer became a frequent visitor to Milwaukee's gay bars, where he got into the habit of inviting casual acquaintances to his home in the basement of his grandmother's house. Here, he sedated his guests with sleeping pills, which put them in a coma-like state, so Dahmer could sexually exploit them.

“It gave me a sense of total control and increased the sexual thrill,” explained Dahmer, who still managed to keep his most macabre desires in check, however, and didn't

Dahmer's fridge was full of horrors, including organs and flesh from his victims.

SHUTTERSTOCK

actually kill his victims.

But one weekend in September 1987, things went wrong. The now 27-year-old Dahmer had fallen into conversation with a slightly younger guy named Steven Tuomi at a gay bar, Club 219. The two agreed to have some fun together in a hotel

74 creepily detailed Polaroid photos of mutilated young men were found by police investigators.

room, where copious amounts of alcohol were consumed. Dahmer saw his chance to slip four or five crushed sleeping pills into Tuomi's glass. When Dahmer opened his eyes the next day, Tuomi lay dead by his side. His head hung limply over the edge of the bed, and he had strangulation marks on his neck. Several of the victim's ribs were also broken, while Dahmer himself had bruises on his forearms. In his intoxicated state, he had apparently given in to his violent urges.

“I felt complete shock. ... I just couldn't believe it happened again after all those years,” the killer later said.

Dahmer rented the hotel room for another night so he could go to the mall and buy a large suitcase. With Tuomi's body stuffed into the case, he ordered a taxi home to his grandmother's. The taxi driver was kind enough to lift the heavy suitcase in and out of the boot.

At his grandmother's house, Dahmer put the suitcase in the root cellar and waited until the old lady went to church the following Sunday. As soon as she was out of the door, Dahmer went into the garage, where he cut the corpse's »

CONSTANTLY IN COURT



BILL WAUGH/AP/ITZAU SCANPIX

The trial was a magnet. Angela Zettel was obsessed and showed up each day.

■ USA'S MOST HATED MAN IN COURT

Cannibal behaved with impeccable manners

The audience in court had expected to meet a cannibalistic monster. They were amazed at Jeffrey Dahmer's normal appearance and friendly, accommodating demeanour.

Jeffrey Dahmer's appearance in court in January 1992 was accompanied by the most stringent security measures in Milwaukee's history; Dahmer was one of America's most hated criminals, and the court feared an assassination attempt. Sniffer dogs searched the courtroom ahead of each session for explosives, and everyone had to submit to a body search and metal detector scan before entering. In court, Dahmer confessed to all the horrific crimes he'd committed over 13 years.

"I know society will never be able to forgive me. I know the families of the victims will never be

able to forgive me for what I have done. ... I know my time in prison will be terrible, but I deserve whatever I get," said a remorseful Dahmer. Throughout the trial, he appeared amenable and subdued, even as the prosecutor listed his crimes: murder, necrophilia, skull drilling, dissection, masturbation, dissolving flesh...

In an attempt to turn his victims into compliant sex zombies, Dahmer drilled a hole in their skulls with this hand drill.

SHUTTERSTOCK



AP/RITZAU SCANPIX

Dahmer smashed the bones of his first victim, but forensic scientists found the remains.

stomach open with a butcher's knife and masturbated at the visceral sight. Afterwards, he cleaned the bones of their flesh and put the pieces in bags. He wrapped the skeleton in an old sheet and smashed the bones with a sledgehammer, then on the Monday morning, he threw all of Tuomi's remains in the rubbish, shortly before the refuse collectors arrived. After being suppressed for years, Dahmer's urges had awoken. "From then on, it was a craving, a hunger ... I just kept doing it, doing it and doing it whenever the opportunity presented itself."

Human flesh on the menu

Over the next year and a half, Dahmer killed three more young men. He lured them back to his basement home on the pretext that he would pay to photograph

them naked. But instead, each session ended the same way: sedation, murder and dissection. On each occasion, Dahmer masturbated several times while he cut up the victims' bodies.

The smell from the body bags, which Dahmer couldn't always get rid of quickly, worried his grandmother, who complained about the unbearable stench. She also didn't care for the fact that Jeffrey drank so much and took so many men home, so in autumn 1989, she threw her grandson out.

Dahmer moved into number 213 at the Oxford Apartments complex on North 25th Street – a poor neighbourhood in Milwaukee, where drug pushers and prostitutes hung out on the streets. For a necrophiliac serial killer, the area was incredibly convenient – the police were so busy



JACK ORTON/AP/RITZAU SCANPIX

In court, Dahmer stated that he knew he was "sick or evil or both".

with other cases that they didn't worry about what a white man was up to.

"As the years went by, and the compulsion became stronger and the obsession more intense, it became the main focus of my life," Dahmer said later. In his new apartment, Jeffrey gave in to a new macabre urge. He killed his sixth victim, Raymond Smith, as usual, but instead of throwing all the flesh away, the killer kept Smith's heart and biceps for a special purpose.

Dahmer cooked pieces of the muscles in a pan. Then, while looking at a picture of Smith, he ate the human flesh bite by bite with enormous pleasure. Eating bits of his victims gradually became a regular ritual for Dahmer if he found the men particularly attractive. And the serial killer always made sure to have parts of

corpses in his freezer, so he could eat the meat whenever the craving arose.

"It made it feel like they were more of a part of me. Sexually stimulating," Dahmer later explained.

He now also began to keep parts of his victims, just as he had dissected insects and animals, and stored them in jars as a child. The killer acquired a large, blue drum of acid, into which he dumped dismembered body parts.

Slowly the flesh dissolved away, leaving only the pale bones. The skulls, in particular, were regarded by Dahmer as trophies, which he hid in drawers and cupboards. The drum of acid stood in the bedroom,

where Dahmer had plastered the walls with gruesome pictures he'd taken of his victims' mutilated torsos. But the smell of rotting meat seeped from the apartment and into the hallway, where

people began to notice the stench. Several times, unhappy neighbours knocked on the door of number 213 to complain, but Dahmer politely just said his freezer had broken. The explanation was accepted by his neighbours, and the serial killer was able to continue unhindered.

450 journalists from over 100 media outlets from around the world reported on the trial.

Attempted to make zombies

By the spring of 1991, Dahmer had killed more than 10 men. The compulsion to explore the human

»»



MURDERPEDIA

Dahmer cut up Steven Tuomi's body while his grandma was at church.

Tuomi's corpse was hidden in a suitcase, then cut into small pieces with a butcher's knife.



SHUTTERSTOCK



MARY F. CALVERT/REDUX/RITZAU SCANPIX

While stationed in Germany, Dahmer raped Preston Davis.



MARY F. CALVERT/REDUX/RITZAU SCANPIX

In the military, 17-year-old Billy J Capshaw was raped and tortured by Dahmer.

body to achieve sexual gratification had driven the killer to try new

experiments. He'd begun drilling a hole into his victim's skull while they were still alive.

"I tried to create living zombies with uric acid in the drill. ... I just wanted to have the person under my complete control," Dahmer said.

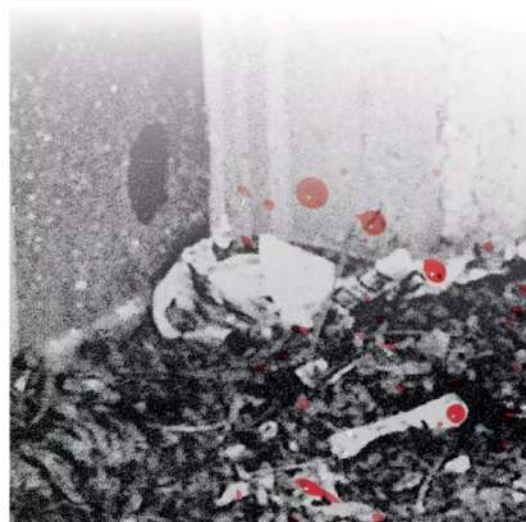
Once he had stunned his victims, the killer took a hand drill and drilled right into the brain. Afterwards, he squirted boiling water and hydrochloric acid into the brain, hoping his victims would become some kind of zombies, who could carry out simple commands without resistance. Dahmer wanted his victims to become mindless sex slaves.

Unsurprisingly, the zombie attempts were unsuccessful. Some of the guinea pigs woke up after a few hours with an agonising headache, but soon died.

Almost escaped

On 27th May 1991, Dahmer's thirteenth victim - 14-year-old Konerak Sinthasomphone - was also subjected to the killer's drilling after being sedated and raped. While the teenager lay unconscious in the apartment, Dahmer felt like having a beer, so hurried to a nearby kiosk to buy himself a six-pack. When he returned to his apartment block, he saw Sinthasomphone with two women down the street, apparently asking for help. The boy was naked and spoke incoherently, but the women realised he was afraid of the tall man.

Dahmer rushed over and grabbed Sinthasomphone, but before he could



lead his prisoner back to his apartment, a police car appeared.

The killer, who for once was not inebriated, told the officers the young man was his 19-year-old lover, who'd had too much to drink during an altercation. The officers believed his story – Dahmer seemed completely sober, while the teen looked drunk.

It was no wonder Sinthasomphone seemed confused; he was affected by both sleeping pills and having been drilled in the head. Because of his hair, the wound wasn't visible. And thanks to the police's mistake, Dahmer was given free rein to resume his horrific crime – the killer gave the boy another injection, and this time it was deadly.

With the murder of Sinthasomphone, the serial killer had reached a point where he "couldn't control it any more", as he later put it. Now he went completely mad with bloodlust, and by July 1991, his murder rate had risen to one victim a week. But in the perpetual pursuit of young men, vigilance went out the window: "If I'd been thinking rationally I would have stopped. I

wasn't thinking rationally because it just increased and increased. ... I was very careful for years and years ... Very careful ... about making sure nothing incriminating remained, but these last few months, they just went nuts," Dahmer revealed in the hours after his arrest.

The meeting with Tracy Edwards in July 1991, however, was to mark the end of Dahmer's assassination attempts.

Police found skulls everywhere

Around 18.30 on 22nd July 1991, Tracy Edwards entered Dahmer's home in Oxford Apartments. The 32-year-old African-American was with friends when he had met Dahmer in front of a

mall. Dahmer had invited them all home for a drink.

"The two of us will buy the drinks and the others can come later," the

Dahmer had told Edwards. But unbeknown to Edwards, the serial killer had given his friends a false address.

Edwards noticed the stench in apartment 213, but still sat down on the couch when his host handed him a Budweiser.

One beer turned into several, but his friends never arrived, so Edwards suggested he might leave.

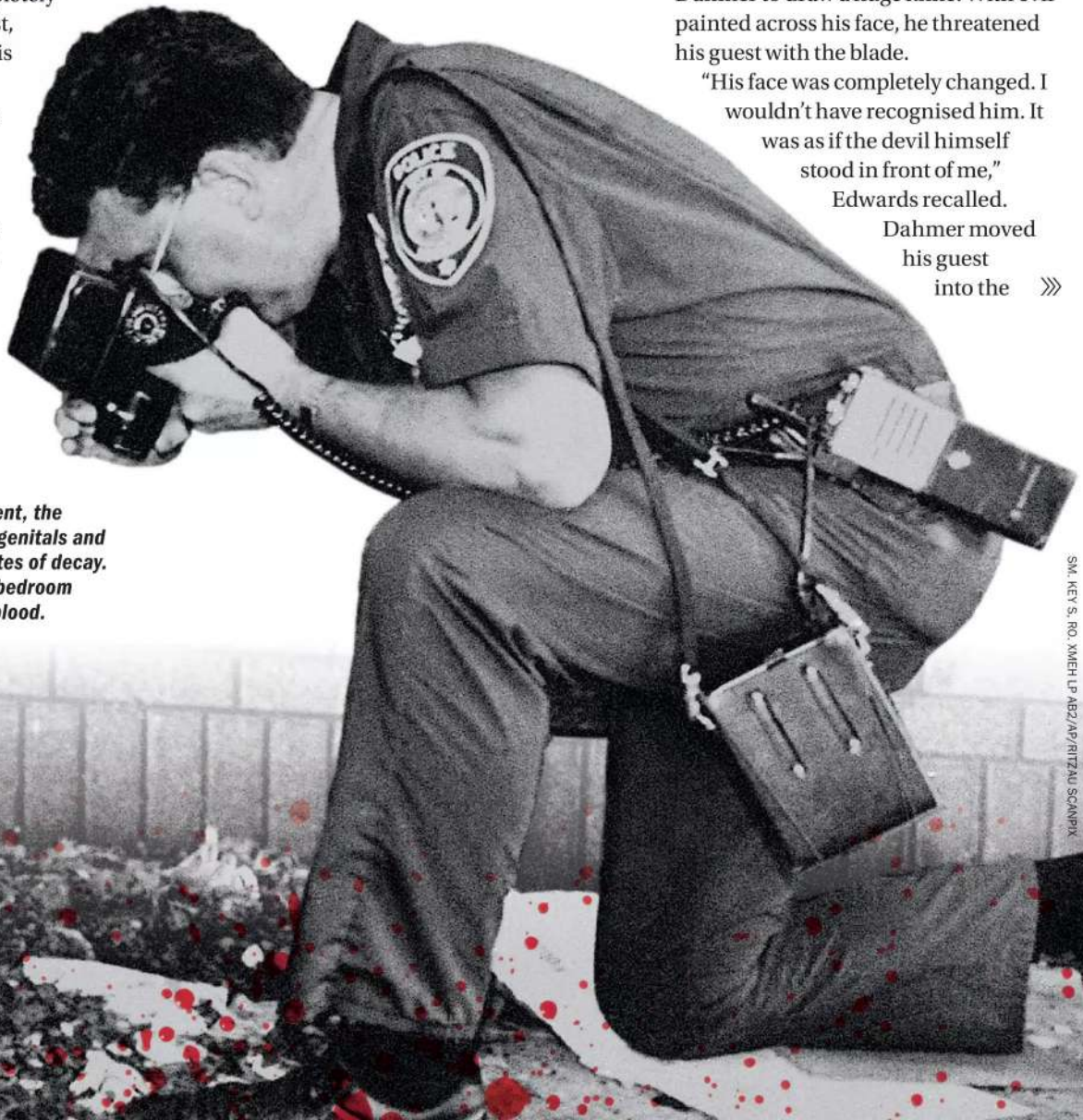
Barely had he announced his departure when Dahmer suddenly clicked a handcuff around his left wrist. Edwards strongly resisted, managing to avoid the handcuffs locking around the other arm. But his resistance caused Dahmer to draw a huge knife. With evil painted across his face, he threatened his guest with the blade.

"His face was completely changed. I wouldn't have recognised him. It was as if the devil himself stood in front of me,"

Edwards recalled.

Dahmer moved his guest into the >>>

\$407,225
was raised by the families of the victims so they could buy and destroy Dahmer's belongings.



In Dahmer's apartment, the police found skulls, genitals and torsos in varying states of decay. The mattress in the bedroom was saturated with blood.

bedroom, where he put on the film *Exorcist III* while ordering his victim into bed. Edwards was horrified. The room stank, and the walls were covered with pictures of mutilated, blood-covered male bodies, some of them half dissolved. Threatening him with the knife, Dahmer suddenly put his ear on Edward's chest.

"I'm going to eat your heart," he snarled.

Knowing he risked ending up in a photo on the wall, Edwards took advantage of a second of inattention from his captor. The 32-year-old struck Dahmer in the face, stunning the killer momentarily. He then ran out the front door and down the stairs to North 25th Street.

Some way down the road, Edwards stopped the patrol car containing officers Robert Rauth and Rolf Mueller. Shortly after, Dahmer was arrested.

In the apartment, police found a veritable house of horrors. The place

looked like a cross between a torture chamber and a slaughterhouse. In addition to the head in the fridge, the freezer abounded with plastic bags of bloody flesh. One of the bags contained a human heart. A separate freezer stored three bags with a severed head in each. In an urn, the forensic

scientists who'd been called in found a pair of severed hands and male genitalia, while another contained two skulls. Five more skulls appeared in a filing cabinet and an album of gruesome photos was found in a box.

In the stinking, blue barrel in the bedroom lay three partially dissolved male torsos. The discovery of an electric saw left the police in no doubt about how the serial killer had cut up his many victims.

When Milwaukee police detective Dennis Murphy began questioning Dahmer, the killer seemed resigned. But one thing Dahmer was sure of was

that what he'd done would make him famous. He was right: the macabre discoveries in Dahmer's apartment became front-page news throughout the US. Day after day, horrific details emerged, and the serial killer was soon referred to as the "Milwaukee Monster" or "Milwaukee Cannibal".

Dahmer was killed in prison

Dahmer willingly confessed his crimes to the police. Murphy's interrogations resulted in 66 hours of footage, with Dahmer recounting 17 murders of boys and men between the ages of 14 and 33. The serial killer admitted he'd killed because murder and mutilation gave him sexual satisfaction and the feeling of having his victims under his "complete control".

"I trained myself to view people as objects of potential pleasure instead of real people. ... Sounds callous and it is, but that's what I did," he told Murphy.

Although Dahmer was diagnosed with several mental illnesses, including borderline personality disorder and schizophrenia, in court he was found sane at the time of the crimes. The fact that he was driven by morbid sexual thoughts and urges was, according to psychiatrists and the jury, no excuse.

In February 1992, Dahmer was sentenced to 15 life sentences – 957 years in prison – for the 15 murders he had committed in Wisconsin, where the death penalty had been abolished. Three months later, he also received a life sentence for his first murder, that of Steven Hicks, in Ohio. Dahmer wasn't convicted of his second murder, of Steven Tuomi in 1987. Despite Dahmer's confession, police could find no corroborating evidence.

"It is over now. This has never been a case of trying to get free. I didn't ever want freedom. Frankly, I wanted death for myself," the serial killer declared when given the floor in the courtroom.

Three years later, Dahmer himself was killed. In November 1994, a schizophrenic prisoner beat the 34-year-old Milwaukee Monster to death. Dahmer submitted to the blows without putting up any resistance.

"God told me to do it," claimed Dahmer's disturbed fellow prisoner. ■

66 hours of recordings were made of Dahmer's confession to the 17 murders he had committed.

■ QUARREL OVER JEFFREY'S ASHES

Parents argued perpetually

As a child, Dahmer was left to fend for himself. His parents constantly argued – even after their son's death.

Jeffrey Dahmer's parents, Joyce and Lionel, lived a chaotic life. His mother suffered from depression and had hypochondriac tendencies, while his father was a workaholic, so the boy received little attention from the pair. He retreated into his own world and played with imaginary friends. In 1978, his parents divorced, but both attended Dahmer's trial. In 1994, Lionel published the book *A Father's Story* and donated some of the profits to the victims' families. After Jeffrey's cremation, the parents quarrelled over who should have the ashes – and ended up getting half each. The brain had been preserved for research purposes at his mother's request, but a judge requested that it be cremated in December 1995.



Jeffrey's childhood was marked by constant quarrels between his parents.



Police found the remains of Steven Hicks in the garden of Dahmer's parents in Bath, Ohio.

Games of chess inspired serial killer

2001 Alexander Pichushkin grew up in a quiet part of Moscow and was a sweet-natured and outgoing little boy – until the day he hit his head. The accident turned him into an aggressive outsider, bullied by other children. Pichushkin could only find solace in chess, but eventually even that wasn't enough to act as an outlet for his frustration. Instead, he chose to take the game in a deadly direction.



MURDERPEDIA

ALEXANDER PICHUSHKIN

"The Chessboard Killer"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARK:** Planned to kill 64 people – one for each square on a chessboard
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 49-61
- **MURDER METHOD:** Blunt force trauma
- **LOCATION:** Moscow, Russia
- **STATUS:** Sentenced to life imprisonment on 29th October 2007

Young Alexander Pichushkin spent the afternoon as he had so many others: in the playground in Bitsevsky Park. The boy sat on the swing. Back and forth. Back and forth. But for one tragic moment, he lost his balance, slid backwards and landed with a bump on the ground. Dazed, he started to sit up, just as the swing swung back to hit the boy square on the forehead. He momentarily blacked out as he tumbled into the grass.

After a few minutes, the boy's friends got him back on his feet. They brushed off the dirt and followed him home to his mother, Natalya. But something didn't return home with Alexander Pichushkin from the playground that day. From the moment the swing hit his forehead, the boy was no longer the same. The happy, easy-going companion had disappeared, along with the sweet, helpful and neighbourly child. His empathy gone, Pichushkin's bright

mind had been turned down a dark side road, and at least 49 people would pay for his accident with their lives. The boy who returned home that day would develop into one of the worst serial killers in Russian history.

Mood swings cost him friends

Alexander Pichushkin's life began in 1974, and until the day in the playground, his life was similar to many other suburban Soviet children. He'd never known his father and had lived all his life in a one-bedroom apartment on the fifth floor of a Stalinist concrete block in the Konkovo District, ten kilometres south-west of the centre of Moscow. The small apartment also housed his younger half-sister Katya as well as their mother Natalya. Pichushkin and his mother slept in the living room, leaving Katya the bedroom. Natalya worked hard to ensure they didn't go without, so while Pichushkin didn't see much of his mother, the small family enjoyed their free time together. When his mother

wasn't at home, Pichushkin spent most of his days in the huge Bitsevsky Park, which began a mere 200 metres from his home and stretched several kilometres away from the city to the south. Here he'd play with his friends, who preferred to go to the park rather than sit at home doing homework.

Pichushkin was happy with his lot. He harboured no dreams of fame or wealth – he was a citizen of the Soviet Union and believed his life would follow the same path as most of the other men in his neighbourhood: a life of physical labour in a factory within the district he'd grown up in, with his days off spent getting drunk.

After his accident, however, Pichushkin struggled to keep his life together. He had difficulty concentrating in school, and the otherwise bright boy couldn't keep up. He became easily irritated, often responding aggressively and impetuously. His friendships dissipated, and Pichushkin became more and more isolated, finding himself roaming alone through the park, an outsider who was now often bullied.

In a surprisingly short space of time, Pichushkin had gone from being a popular child with his pick of friends to a lonely boy whom no one would talk to. His mother could see his behaviour had changed. She enrolled him in another school, but Pichushkin failed to settle.

It was then that Pichushkin's

grandfather had an idea. He believed the boy lacked a male role model, so agreed that his grandson would move in with him for a period. He lived locally, and Pichushkin embraced the idea. He rejoiced in moving out of the cramped apartment, while his grandfather became the friend he'd been missing for so long.

Comfort from chess

Natalya's father was an old-school Soviet who believed a man must master two things in life:

chess and vodka. The board game was taught to Pichushkin in a corner of »»

53 – the number of people serial killer Andrei Chikatilo was convicted of killing. Pichushkin aimed to surpass him.

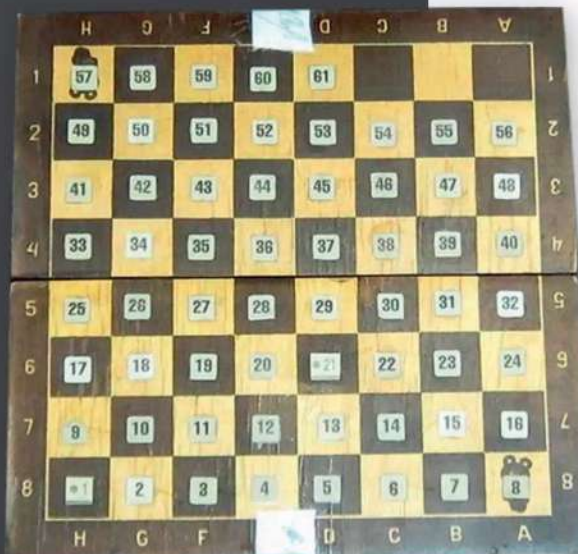
■ CHESS MANIA

Killer was obsessed with chess

Game inspired Pichushkin to go on murder spree.

After moving to his grandfather's home, Alexander Pichushkin's eyes were opened to chess. He particularly enjoyed the feeling of power over his opponents as he captured their rooks, knights and pawns. By playing chess against older men in Bitsevsky Park, Pichushkin found his victims. The chessboard also inspired the serial killer to target 64 victims: one for each square on the board.

Pichushkin marked every murder on his chessboard – his aim was to complete it.





Bitsevsky Park, where men and older boys would gather in the afternoon and on weekends to play against each other. Pichushkin quickly became proficient – with chess, he had found a game he could master regardless of the brain damage he'd sustained in his accident. He was able to effortlessly think many moves ahead and took great pleasure in crushing his opponents – especially when he beat someone older than him.

He also quickly learned how to drink vodka. Despite only being 14 years old, Pichushkin drank with the others in the park as they played, and his drinking often carried on long after the final checkmate. Drinking and hangovers didn't make it any easier to keep up in school, but Pichushkin enjoyed being part of the community, and thrived while living in his grandfather's house – just the two of them and his pet dog.

Scared children witless

After a few years, however, his happy life came to an abrupt end. His grandfather died suddenly, and Pichushkin moved with his dog back into his mother's cramped apartment at 2 Khersonskaya Street, where space had become even more of a premium – his sister's boyfriend had also moved in, and they were expecting a baby.

After finishing the first part of his education, Pichushkin enrolled in a vocational school, but he usually

bunked off. Instead, he spent his days drinking vodka in the park – occasionally with the chess players, but increasingly on his own. Some days would be spent peacefully sipping vodka on a bench, but at other times he felt more vicious. As a 16 to 17-year-old, Pichushkin amused himself by terrifying children playing in the park, and occasionally he'd film their reactions as he cornered them before

“It was all the same to me who I killed. I killed for the sake of the process itself”

Alexander Pichushkin to the Russian police.

threatening to kill them. It never manifested into much more than a few punches or kicks, but they learned to fear him, and Pichushkin loved the feeling of power as he stared into their terrified eyes. He wanted more.

On those rare days when he did show up at school, Pichushkin would chat with fellow student Mikhail Odichuk. He had the feeling that he'd found a kindred spirit in Odichuk when it came to gaining personal enjoyment at the

expense of others. One day he shared a dark secret with Odichuk: Pichushkin was no longer content just to terrorise, he wanted to kill someone.

Odichuk – probably thinking it was a joke – agreed to be involved, and the two 18-year-old boys left school to commit murder. Pichushkin revealed his plan: to find a victim that no one would miss, such as a drunken, homeless person. But as Pichushkin began to identify potential victims to his accomplice, Odichuk got cold feet. He asked Pichushkin if he seriously intended to kill a random stranger. Pichushkin felt the anger rise in him. He'd entrusted Odichuk with his deepest secret, and then he'd thought it was a joke? He was no better than those fools who'd teased him at school.

Pichushkin now saw no reason to look for a homeless drunkard when the nearest victim was the one standing next to him. When the two boys reached a place hidden from the eyes of others, Pichushkin turned on Odichuk and started pounding him with his bare fists, not stopping until he'd become a murderer.

Would best the Rostov Ripper

Many serial killers find that their first murder sates their bloodlust for some time. The experience may have felt more intense than they'd imagined, or perhaps the fear of discovery dampens their urge. Pichushkin was actually arrested and interrogated by the police, but he denied all knowledge of his classmate's death. And the police believed his story; they let Pichushkin go and dropped the investigation.

Not long afterwards, Pichushkin dropped out of school. His beloved dog had died, leaving him depressed, but he managed to secure a shelf-stacking job in a grocery store, and the simple, repetitive work suited him well. In his spare time, he continued to play chess, and drank himself senseless most days. When still relatively sober, he'd follow the trial of Andrei Chikatilo – the notorious Butcher of Rostov. Chikatilo was a serial killer accused of murdering 53 women and children, and Pichushkin avidly read any newspapers reports. While others were repelled by the gory



The serial killer lived with his mother, sister, brother-in-law and niece in a small apartment.

Chessboard Killer found love in prison

Although he's claimed to have murdered 61 people, Alexander Pichushkin has received love letters in prison – and even proposed to one sender.

In prison, Alexander Pichushkin has encountered the strange phenomenon that many serial killers experience after their arrest: contact from admiring women. It's known as hybristophilia and concerns the fact that some people find criminals – even those convicted of serious crimes like serial killers – strangely irresistible. For example, notorious killers such as Ted Bundy, Anders Behring Breivik and Richard Ramirez (known as the “Night Stalker”) have all received love letters from admiring women while in prison. Ted Bundy, who was executed in 1989 for raping and killing at least 30 women, even married one of his suitors while his trial was ongoing.

The church bells have also come close to ringing for Pichushkin. On Russian television, a woman known as Natalya has spoken openly about her love for the serial killer. The two have corresponded by letter for a long time, and they were said to be so in love that Pichushkin proposed to her. However, the Russian authorities subsequently prevented the couple from remaining in contact with each other.

However, Natalya maintains that her love for the Chessboard Killer remains. She still wants to marry him and has even had a picture of Pichushkin – complete with chessboard – tattooed on one of her arms.



Natalya wears a wedding dress on Russian TV to demonstrate her love for Pichushkin.

details, in Pichushkin's mind the reports became almost a textbook guide to murder and how to get away with it. Moreover, Chikatilo was just a simple peasant's son, while Pichushkin viewed himself as an overlooked genius capable of so much more. The thought of surpassing Chikatilo grew in his head. Why stop at 53? Why not murder 64 people: one for each of the squares on a chessboard?

The most obvious crime scene was Bitsevsky Park, which he knew so well. As he pondered the details of his plan,

Pichushkin explored the more remote areas of the huge park, which was mostly forest. Just like the day he confided in his now-dead classmate, his aim would be to find someone who wouldn't immediately be missed. Older, homeless men were commonplace in the park – all heavily intoxicated and easy to lure off the path with a bottle of vodka. But what to do with the body once the murder had been committed? Beneath the park ran a network of large sewer pipes, and hidden behind some trees, Pichushkin found a well. He

looked down to see the waste water flowing along ten metres below. What he threw down here would surely never show up again. Alexander Pichushkin had formulated his plan, and was now ready to implement it.

Played chess with death

On 17th May 2001, Pichushkin entered Bitsevsky Park with the express intention to kill. He sought out the place where he'd so often competed at chess and played a few games against Yevgeny Pronin – a fellow outsider, »»

but somewhat older man whom he knew from the park. Pronin was both homeless and a drunk. After playing for a few hours, Pichushkin suggested that the two sit down in the woods and share Pichushkin's bottle of vodka. Pichushkin concocted the lie that today was the anniversary of his beloved dog's death. It was buried right here in the park. Sympathetic – and thirsty for vodka – Pronin followed Pichushkin away into the woods where no one could see or hear them.

The two men chatted and drank. Pronin was extremely drunk and became confused when Pichushkin started swearing at him. The old man was probably aware that he wouldn't be able to defend himself if Pichushkin became violent. He didn't react when Pichushkin smashed a stone into his skull. Or was it a hammer, or an iron bar? When Pichushkin admitted murdering Pronin many years later, he struggled to remember the details of each murder. But Pronin's brutal slaying was certainly a trial run for the procedure Pichushkin would use time and again. After luring his victims to the sewer well with the story of the dead

dog and the promise of vodka, Pichushkin would initially be amiable towards them, but then became savage and foul-mouthed before smashing something hard on their heads, causing them to lose consciousness. He might then smash their face with the vodka bottle and break some additional bones, or he might just drag the

“For me, life without killing is like life without food for you”

Alexander Pichushkin after his capture.

unconscious victim to the well, dropping the limp body ten metres into the sewer water. Whether Pronin died from the blow to the head or the fall into the sewer – or simply drowned in the water – no one would ever know.

Just as Pichushkin predicted, the drunkard wasn't missed. One or two chess players might have asked after

him the following day, but Pronin was quickly forgotten.

Locals started to gossip

After Pronin's murder, Pichushkin returned home to his mother's apartment, and – after making sure he was alone – retrieved his chessboard from under his bed. He carefully marked the first white square. One murder executed, 63 to go.

As he did this, Pronin's body drifted through the sewer system. At some point, his corpse might have entered a sewage treatment plant, where it would have been broken down with the rest of the neighbourhood's waste. No one discovered anything suspicious. His body was never found.

Now he was up and running, Pichushkin's murderous plot started to gain momentum. Several times a week he picked out a new victim in the park. Most he knew from the chess group or at home from the neighbouring entrances on Khersonskaya Street.

On 21st July 2001 – just over two months after Pronin's murder – he took the life of his eleventh victim, pensioner Victor Volkov. The killing followed his usual procedure, but this time Pichushkin overheard the local housewives gossiping. Where did Volkov really go? Did the Chechen mafia take him? Didn't someone say he'd been picked up by the police? Or maybe he was in hospital – didn't he have a bad heart? Fortunately for Pichushkin, it was all pure speculation, and after a few days, talk died down – even as Volkov's body floated through the sewers under Bitsevsky Park.

The park wasn't as popular during the autumn and winter months, giving Pichushkin few opportunities to target lonely old men, so when he went hunting for his seventeenth victim on 23rd February 2002, he switched to a new type of target: a woman.

Maria Viricheva had moved to the outskirts of Moscow from a poor village. The authorities had yet to approve her desired move to the big city, so she lived there illegally. During the day, the young woman worked hard to earn money she could send home to her family, while otherwise keeping largely

■ CRIMINAL ROLE MODEL

Butcher of Rostov was idol

The Rostov Ripper was known as Russia's worst serial killer. Alexander Pichushkin wanted to surpass him.

Alexander Pichushkin's murderous plot took off in earnest after he began to follow the trial of Andrei Chikatilo, also known as the Butcher of Rostov. Throughout the 1980s, Chikatilo had spread terror among Russians with his bestial murders, in which children and young women were killed and dismembered in Rostov's parks. The serial killer had made little effort to hide the bodies but managed to evade capture for years. In fact, Chikatilo was so successful that he became known as the worst serial killer in recent Soviet history. Pichushkin pored over the descriptions of Chikatilo's



GETTY IMAGES

Andrei Chikatilo was executed in 1994 after being found guilty of committing 53 murders.

murders with great interest – as if they were a handbook on killing. At the same time, the Rostov Ripper's carelessness provided additional motivation: if Chikatilo could kill so many without being caught, Pichushkin believed he could easily break the murderer's record.



Pichushkin threw many of his victims into a ten-metre-deep well in the forest.

RITZAU SCANPIX

to herself so she wouldn't be reported to the police.

One day she fell into conversation with the friendly Pichushkin. He was a little sad because this very day was the anniversary of him losing his dog. When he asked if Maria would join him and visit the place in the park where his four-legged friend was buried, she said yes. Unwittingly, she accompanied the serial killer to his slaughterhouse.

When they reached the forest well, Pichushkin offered her a sip of vodka. But to his great surprise, Maria refused. She said she was pregnant. Now what? Getting the victim to drink themselves senseless was a fixed part of the ritual. He would

have to move on. He took a sip from the bottle himself before pulling a hammer from his inside pocket to strike the surprised woman in the face. Dazed, but still conscious, Maria took a few steps back towards the well.

Pichushkin moved quickly and instead of striking her again, shoved her backwards into its depths.

It was a cold day, so Pichushkin hurried back to the apartment. He had no idea that Maria Viricheva had miraculously come to her senses at the

bottom of the well. Shaken and with blood running down her face, she slowly began the arduous climb up to the surface. When she came out of the well, police visited her in hospital where she related her story, but when officers

asked to see her papers, a crying Maria was forced to admit that she'd moved to Moscow illegally. The police gave her a choice: either they could file a report of the assault while simultaneously fining her and deporting her back to her home village, or she could drop the charge and they would let her go.

Police ignored warnings

Maria did just what the work-shy officers hoped. She withdrew her allegation and then kept well away from Bitsevsky Park, afraid that Pichushkin would discover her and finish what he'd started. But Pichushkin had apparently already forgotten Maria Viricheva. A few days later, he'd found his next victim.

Pichushkin relentlessly continued on his murderous path. A few months after the assault on Maria, he tried to kill 13-year-old skateboarder

61 of 64 squares had been marked on Pichushkin's chessboard when he was arrested.

»»

Mikhail Lobov, but when Lobov, beaten and unconscious, was pushed into the well, his jacket caught on a piece of metal saving him from the fall.

Just like Viricheva, Lobov managed to crawl back up and seek out a police officer, who ignored his pleas. Not even when Lobov spotted Pichushkin at a subway station and tried to draw the police's attention would they listen to him. As Lobov was threatened with arrest, Pichushkin hurriedly disappeared into the crowd.

After some 40 kills, Pichushkin appeared to have found life as a serial killer too mundane. Sure, neighbours had started discussing the many unexplained disappearances, but neither they nor the police had any idea that an ingenuous and vicious serial killer was in their midst, and if no one knew about his misdeeds, how could the Chessboard Killer ever become as infamous as his role model Chikatilo?

One day, out of desperation to be noticed, a drunken Pichushkin stormed into a police station to admit everything. But no one believed him. Just like Lobov, he found himself thrown out on to the street. If Pichushkin was to be recognised as the genius he saw in the mirror, then he would have to change his modus operandi. His victims would no longer be hidden beneath the ground in the sewers. From now on, he would leave the bodies easily visible on the

forest's paths and in clearings, so the authorities would surely discover that a cunning serial killer was among them.

Made himself easy to discover

The first victim of Pichushkin's new strategy was Nikolai Zakarchenko, and he was no random choice. Zakarchenko was a retired police officer and Pichushkin anticipated that the discovery of a murdered colleague would finally awaken the comatose law enforcement agencies. He was right.

Shortly after Zakarchenko's body was found in November 2005, police set up a new special unit to investigate the crime. They interrogated more local citizens and people started talking. Slowly it dawned on both police and civilians that an astonishing number of people had disappeared from the neighbourhood's apartment blocks. People suddenly felt unsafe and forbade their children to use the local park. Maybe the killer was someone they knew? Maybe he'd strike again soon?

Although Pichushkin knew very well that the police were monitoring the apartment blocks and the park, he continued with his murder spree. Now he didn't just enjoy the deadly act itself, but also overhearing conversations on street corners, in the metro or in the store where he worked. Frightened neighbours and acquaintances gossiped about the murders and speculated who might be behind them.

Police now had plenty of physical evidence to guide them, because Pichushkin made no attempt to hide his victims. He usually smashed their skulls in with a hammer and then left them lying on a path, behind a tree, or simply where he'd killed them. The serial killer was intentionally leaving so many traces that police could hardly avoid catching him. Now he was simply waiting for the investigative team to do its job. And on 14th June 2006 – six months and eight murders after the discovery of the retired police officer – the murderous game came to an end for the chess-mad killer.

On this day, Pichushkin invited his work colleague Marina Moskalyeva for a walk in the park. He told her about the anniversary of his dog's death, and she



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agreed to a walk in the park to visit the burial site. What Pichushkin didn't know is that during a work break, Moskalyeva had slipped home to write a note to her son. She explained that after work she was going for a walk in the park with her colleague Alexander Pichushkin, and that she would therefore be home a little late. But she never showed up.

Left in his mentor's shadow

When Marina's son arrived home from school, he turned on the television and saw in a news bulletin that a female had just been found in Bitsevsky Park. He stiffened and called Pichushkin. The



RITZAU SCANPIX

Pichushkin committed his murders in the huge Bitsevsky Park outside Moscow.



After his arrest, Pichushkin was annoyed that he did not gain the same recognition as Andrei Chikatilo – despite the media attention.

killer claimed he hadn't seen Moskalyeva for months. In desperation, the son called his father, who in turn informed the police.

Investigator Andrei Suprunenko knew the trail was hot, and when they viewed surveillance footage from the park's metro station showing Moskalyeva and Pichushkin together, Suprunenko decided to take action. At midnight on 16th June 2006, special forces stormed the Pichushkins' apartment. The maniac from Bitsevsky Park had been apprehended.

During the search of the apartment, police found the chessboard under Pichushkin's bed; 61 of the 64 squares

had been marked. Alexander Pichushkin admitted that he was the serial killer, but he didn't agree with the police on how many killings he was responsible for. The Chessboard Killer insisted he'd murdered 61 people – eight more than his role-model Andrei Chikatilo – but Russian authorities charged him with 49 murders.

When psychologists asked about Pichushkin's motives, they gained a frightening insight into his mind. The killer replied that murder for him was as important as eating or drinking. Killing was something he had to do to survive. At the same time, he saw himself merely as a guide who led his

victims on to another life – not as he truly was: a bestial monster who stole the lives of his innocent victims. In the end, he was only offended by the fact he wasn't recognised as a better serial killer than his mentor – on 24th October 2007, Alexander Pichushkin was sentenced. Since Chikatilo's execution in 1994, Russia had abolished the death penalty. As Pichushkin was found guilty of committing 49 murders, he was sentenced to life in prison – with the first 15 years in solitary confinement. To this day, the killer from Bitsevsky Park sits alone in his cell – far away from the place where he drank, played chess, and murdered. ■

HULTON IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES



DAVID BERKOWITZ

"Son of Sam"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARKS:** Alleged hearing voices from demons – in the form of a black dog – who ordered him to kill
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 6
- **MURDER METHOD:** Shooting
- **LOCATION:** New York City, USA
- **STATUS:** Sentenced to six life sentences, or a total of 365 years behind bars, on 12th June 1978

“Son of Sam” was persecuted by demons

1977 The streets of New York were filled with horror in 1977. With no motive, a murderer calling himself “Son of Sam” was shooting young women and couples, and leaving behind gruesome letters. Behind the gun hid 23-year-old loner David Berkowitz, who’d suffered from a tortured mind since childhood. In just one year, the killer attacked eight times – according to his statement, it was all on the orders of demons.



Valentina Suriani and Alexander Esau had spent a wonderful evening together. First, the young lovers had been to the cinema, then on to a party, and then at 03.00 on 16th April 1977, the couple was sitting in a car in New York's Bronx, passionately kissing goodbye.

Eighteen-year-old Valentina was sitting on her boyfriend's lap, with her legs across the passenger seat, when a dark figure suddenly appeared at the passenger window. The unknown male raised his .44-calibre revolver and fired twice. The glass shattered, and the bullets shot straight into Valentina's brain, killing her instantly.

Alexander Esau tried to duck but failed. The killer fired two more bullets that hit Esau in the head. The young man lay dying on the seat while the killer turned around and placed a white envelope in the middle of the pavement, then disappeared into the night. Shortly after, the first police

officers arrived at the scene. As they looked at the lifeless couple, their suspicions were immediately raised – the so-called .44 Caliber Killer had been at work again. Since the summer of 1976, he had killed three people and injured four – all young women and couples. And the police knew almost nothing about the serial killer.

But this time, the killer had left a clue: in the white envelope, the officers found a letter addressed to NYPD Captain Joseph Borrelli, deputy commander of the task force that was trying to hunt down the infamous .44 Caliber Killer. Borrelli had spoken about the case to the media several times and had stated that the killer didn't like women.

"I am deeply hurt by your calling me a wemon [sic] hater. I am not. But I am a

monster. I am the 'Son of Sam' ... I am on a different wave length then [sic] everybody else – programmed too [sic] kill," the serial killer had written in clumsy block capitals.

For the first time, police had a little insight into who was behind the murderous attacks in New York. But no one yet knew that the mysterious Son of Sam was a young New Yorker called David Berkowitz – a loner who was driven by quite unusual motives for murder. In the letter, he warned that his misdeeds were far from over: "Police – Let me haunt you with these words; I'll be back! I'll be back!"

Craved darkness as a child

David Berkowitz's childhood was anything but easy. His earliest memory was when his parents, Pearl and Nathan Berkowitz, had told him that

1 black dog, Harvey the Labrador, triggered the wave of murders, according to Berkowitz.

■ POLICE WORKED IN THE DARK

Investigation stalled for a long time

The people of New York lived in fear of another murder. The police were under huge pressure to apprehend the killer.

At press conferences, journalists' critical questions – When would the killer be caught? Why weren't the police doing anything? How many murders would it take before the police woke up? – bombarded the investigators, who were desperately seeking a breakthrough.

For months, the police had no clues. Some witnesses claimed to have seen a yellow Volkswagen speeding up and leaving one of the crime scenes, but after a lengthy investigation, the police had to admit that the trail went nowhere. The work of finding everyone who owned a .44-calibre Bulldog pistol didn't pay off either. The police's theory was that the offender was



Detectives John Keenan and Frank McLaughlin answer reporters' questions about the murder investigation.

out to get revenge on women, possibly because he had been repeatedly rejected by the opposite sex. So, police urged young women to stay indoors and recommended that couples should avoid the city's popular lovers' lanes.

he'd been adopted and his biological mother had died during childbirth. The information shocked the five-year-old boy, who later struggled with the belief that he'd been to blame for his mother's death. "I am a little 'brat,'" he believed,

"I am deeply hurt by your calling me a wemon [sic] hater. I am not"

David Berkowitz in a letter to the police.

and the thought that his biological father had apparently not wanted him either cemented Berkowitz's perception of being bad and unwanted.

The young David was hyperactive and often drove his adoptive parents crazy when he ran through the house throwing things around. He was unruly at school, too, and used to interrupt lessons and get into fights with other children. He was seen as strange and made no close friends.

The school viewed Berkowitz with concern and demanded that his parents consult a child psychologist if their son was to be allowed to continue there. For

two years, Berkowitz went to a psychologist every Saturday, but "the therapy sessions had no affect [sic]," he concluded many decades later.

During his childhood, Berkowitz developed an ever-increasing craving for darkness. When his mother thought he was playing outside, he instead crawled under the bed or secreted

himself behind clothes in the wardrobe. For hours, the boy hid in the dark and dwelled on disturbing thoughts – many of which stemmed from horror movies he watched late at night, giving him horrific, realistic nightmares.

His dark state of mind was further nurtured when Berkowitz's adoptive mother died of cancer in 1967. Once again, a certain amount of guilt clung to the now 14-year-old boy, as the disease had been brought out into the open during an argument between him and his mother.

That evening, Berkowitz had roared to his mother that he hated her, and hoped she'd die. She collapsed and was taken to hospital to die shortly after.

A few years later, Berkowitz moved with his father to a new home in the Bronx, New York, where they lived until he finished high school and college. After his mother's death, however, Berkowitz's »»



BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

After the trial, the killer was transferred to Attica Prison, where he spoke to the press.



Newspapers sold better than ever during the murder's killing spree.

mood plummeted, and he became more and more solitary – an oddball who found it especially difficult to get along with women. Life didn't improve when his adoptive father remarried. Berkowitz refused to have anything to do with his stepmother and her daughter, and when they moved into the Berkowitz home in 1971, David moved out. The now 18-year-old enlisted in the army. But the military couldn't solve Berkowitz's issues.

Loner saw demons

David Berkowitz spent three years in the army – for the last of which he was deployed in South Korea, where he ended up regularly taking LSD. The psychedelic drug gave him wild hallucinations and certainly didn't help Berkowitz's already tormented soul.

In 1974, he left the military and returned to New York, where Berkowitz first got a job as a security guard, then as a taxi driver. The 21-year-old was all alone in the big city, as his father had moved with his new family to Florida. Berkowitz felt let down – not least when

New York went dark in summer of 1977

The city suffered a plague of torments – residents not only feared the serial killer, but they also had to endure a heatwave, and a prolonged power cut threw the metropolis into chaos.

The summer of 1977 was one of trials and tribulations in New York. Nothing was normal – the inhabitants of the megacity were gripped by fear of the unknown serial killer, a prolonged heatwave had turned the city into an oven, and in July it seemed as though the authorities were plotting against the hard-hit New Yorkers. On the evening of Wednesday 13th July, an extended power cut plunged virtually the entire city into darkness and threw the metropolis into a day and a half of total chaos – at a time when New York was already suffering from a lack of jobs, money, police, schools, everything...

A series of lightning strikes triggered the power cut that would later become known as the New York City Blackout of

1977. The moment the power went out, gangs, rebels and angry residents took over the city. Shop windows were smashed, stores looted and fires lit, and shootings and violent assaults left their toll on the streets and parks. When the power finally returned, the damage could be assessed: a total of 1,616 shops had been attacked and looted, over 1,000 fires set alight, and around 550 police officers had been injured during the riots. In the largest mass arrest in New York's history, 3,776 people had been apprehended.

"Lightning, looting and lunatics have so far given New York a heavy, angry summer," a newspaper editor stated in August 1977 – by "lunatics" he was referring to Son of Sam, a spectre that appeared in the papers every day.

"Give up! It's only way out," the front pages implored, when they weren't filled with news of another murderous assault committed by the seemingly unstoppable gunman.

In particular, *Daily News* journalist Jimmy Breslin – who in May 1977 had received a handwritten letter from the killer, in which he referred to himself as Son of Sam – had an incredibly busy summer. He'd doggedly stuck to the case and had become personally involved. In the newspaper, he addressed the killer directly and tried to persuade him to surrender. In 2008, the prestigious Library of America selected one of Breslin's numerous Son of Sam articles for a book compiling the best US crime journalism of 200 years.

he uncovered a deep secret: his biological mother had not died during childbirth; the adoption agency had advised his adoptive parents to lie to him. Via the census, David Berkowitz discovered that his real name was Richard Falco and he'd been born in Brooklyn. Using an old phone book, he found his biological mother, who was of Italian descent. She'd become pregnant by a Jewish man, and their religious disagreements had led to the adoption.

Ideally, the discovery and reunion might have helped Berkowitz out of the darkness. But by that time, he already had an interest in the occult, and was increasingly hearing voices. From a letter Berkowitz wrote to his adoptive father in November 1975, it was clear he was developing dangerous thoughts: "Dad, the world is getting dark now. I can feel it more and more. The people, they are developing a hatred for me. You wouldn't believe how much some people hate me. Many of them want to kill me. I don't even know these people, but still they hate me. Most of them are young. I walk down the street and they

spit and kick at me. The girls call me ugly and they bother me the most. The guys just laugh. Anyhow, things will soon change for the better," he wrote.

David Berkowitz had started think he was surrounded by demons. Some of

"You wouldn't believe how much some people hate me. Many of them want to kill me"

David Berkowitz in a letter to his father in 1975.

them wanted him to kill, and Berkowitz could no longer resist them. Just a month later, he threw himself into his first bloody assault.

Christmas Eve turned blood red

Festive music and glittering garlands filled the streets of New York on Christmas Eve 1975, as 15-year-old

Michelle Forman made her way home. She had no idea that her movements were being closely watched by Berkowitz, who'd hidden a hunting knife under his winter coat.

As Forman strolled across a footbridge in the Bronx, Berkowitz picked up speed and quickly approached from behind. In a split second, he pulled the knife and stabbed it into the teenager's body six times, then quickly fled in the direction of a nearby car park. Michelle Forman had been stabbed three times in the head and three times on the body, but survived and was discharged after a week in hospital.

Although the 15-year-old high school student escaped with her life, a killer had been born. Berkowitz soon acquired a more effective murder weapon – a five-shot Bulldog revolver – and when winter turned into summer, he was ready to commit the first of a total of eight shootings.

Friends Donna Lauria and Jody Valenti had been in town on 29th July 1976, and were sitting in Jody's car in »



"Give up!" urged journalist Jimmy Breslin in the Daily News.

Every day brought fresh news about the serial killer's crimes.

".44-cal. killer is taunting us," the police readily admitted on the front page.



BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

neck, the second hit the teenager in the arm. Inside the car, Jody screamed as the criminal fired his third shot, which hit her in the thigh. Jody fell forward and slammed her head on the steering wheel, making the horn suddenly blare. The deafening noise made the killer run away.

"We've been shot," Jody shouted a few seconds later, as Donna's father came rushing out of the apartment complex where the Lauria family lived. He could see his daughter hanging halfway out of the car door, fighting for her life, but she was so badly injured that she died on the way to hospital.

Berkowitz had killed his first victim. At this point, no one could possibly know that the worst serial killer in New York's history had only just got started.

Son of Sam sent letters

After the attack on Lauria and Valenti, Berkowitz drove home in his yellow Ford Galaxie. For the first time in a long while, he felt at peace. Finally, he'd done as his demons had wanted – as he later told the police, it was they who'd driven him to the bloody attacks.

But Berkowitz didn't have peace of mind for long. He'd moved into the Yonkers neighbourhood, north of the Bronx, where he lived in an apartment near a man who kept a dog in a kennel. Every night, the black Labrador barked violently, and the noise filled Berkowitz's head. He boiled with rage and sent anonymous threatening letters to the owner. But the dog kept barking and prevented Berkowitz from sleeping. His disturbed mind interpreted the howls as messages from demons, ordering him out into the streets to kill women and couples.

By April 1977, Berkowitz had attacked five more young women and couples before murdering Valentina Suriani and wounding Alexander Esau, and writing the letter to Captain Joseph Borrelli. The serial killer had thus killed four people and seriously injured five.

In the Borrelli letter, Son of Sam revealed that he felt "like an outsider"

who loved "to hunt. Prowling the streets looking for fair game". Police decided that they were dealing with a maniac – or someone who pretended to be. Among other things, Son of Sam explained that he killed for his father, Sam, who was thirsty for young blood. In a psychological profile published in the media by the police on 26th May 1977, experts had diagnosed the serial killer as a neurotic and paranoid schizophrenic person, who probably

"Sam ... won't let me stop killing until he gets his fill of blood"

Berkowitz in letter to a journalist in June 1977.

thought he was possessed by a demon. The profile would later turn out to be spot on.

A month after the message to the police, Berkowitz sent a long letter to journalist Jimmy Breslin of the *New York Daily News*. Son of Sam told him that "Sam's a thirsty lad and he won't let me stop killing until he gets his fill of blood". The newspaper printed the slightly incoherent letter in June 1977. In less than an hour, all 1,116,000 copies of the paper had been sold – a record that would only be broken when the killer was later arrested.

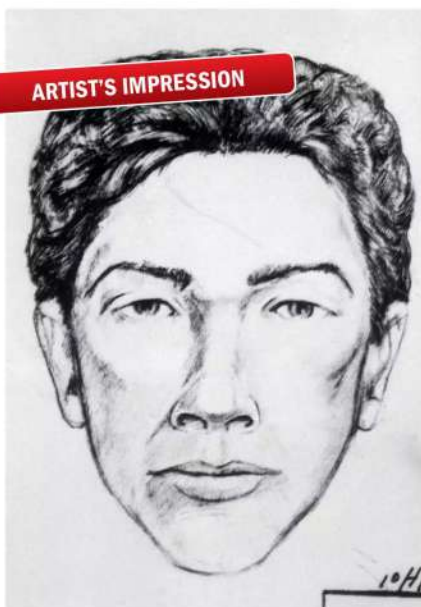
25 years in prison per murder he committed: 24-year-old Berkowitz's sentence in 1978.

Women restyled hair

The Son of Sam killings were being talked about by the whole of New York. One man had managed to terrorise 16 million inhabitants. The summer of 1977 was incredibly hot, but

people were afraid to go out late at night. The bars and discos had few customers, and young people in the Bronx and Queens in particular, where the killer had struck, were terrified. Many women cut their hair short and dyed it blond because Son of Sam had only murdered young women with >>>

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



GETTY IMAGES

The police artist's impression, based on witness statements, was fairly accurate.

front of Donna's home in the North Bronx, talking about boys. A little after 01.00, they said goodnight, then Donna opened the door to get out of the car. Just then, the 18-year-old noticed a young man standing on the pavement a few feet away.

"Who is this guy? What does he want?" Donna asked her friend. At that moment, the curly-haired white man stuck his hand into a paper bag and pulled out a gun, a .44-calibre Bulldog.

The stranger squatted down on the pavement and shot. The first bullet drilled into the right side of Donna's

Letters sent police investigators astray

A distinctive writing style and drawings led the police to mistakenly believe that the sender was a cartoonist.

In the handwritten letter left by the killer in April 1977 with the bodies of Esau and Suriani, he called himself "Son of Sam" – until then, the police had referred to him as the .44 Caliber Killer, because of the offender's weapon of choice. The killer told the public about himself twice – the first letter was addressed to the police, the second to journalist Jimmy Breslin at the *New York Daily News*. The wording of the two letters ranged from threatening to friendly.

In the letter to the police, Son of Sam warned that he was killing for his father and he loved to hunt. In the letter to Breslin, Berkowitz wrote on the one hand that "Sam ... won't let me

stop killing", while in a PS he added, "Upon my capture I promise to buy all the guys working the case a new pair of shoes if I can get up the money."

Several experts analysed the letters, along with the drawings and symbols. Because of the distinctive writing style and illustrations, the police assumed at one point that they were looking for a cartoonist. That trail went cold.

Berkowitz's neighbour, Craig Glassman, also received letters. One warned: "You have been chosen. You have been chosen to die. ... You, Craig Glassman are truly Satan's child. Because Craig is Craig so must the streets be filled with Craig (death)."

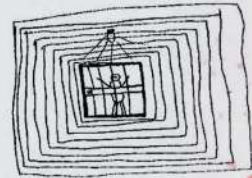
BECAUSE CRAIG IS CRAIG
SO MUST THE STREETS
BE FILLED WITH CRAIG (DEATH)



AND HUGE DROPS OF LEAD
POURED DOWN UPON HER HEAD
UNTIL SHE WAS DEAD.
YET, THE CATS STILL CAME OUT
AT NIGHT TO MATE
AND THE SPARROWS STILL
SING IN THE MORNING.

I am so glad I have been apprehended and I
wish that someone would help me.

Final desperation



I am not well Not at all

"I'm not well not at all," wrote the killer, once apprehended.

MANHATTAN AND STATEN ISLAND
SAID THE ARE READY HUH?
LETS SEE HOW READY YOU
ARE O.K. I ALMOST FORGOT
RIVERDALE. YOU GUYS HAVE MADE
ME VERY ANGRY. \$\$\$
SO KISS MY ASS AND
MOTHER FUCK ALL YOU
BITCHES.



I AM DEEPLY HURT BY YOUR CALLING
ME A WEMON HATER. I AM NOT.
I AM THE SON OF SAM. I AM A WITEL
WHEN FATHER SAM GETS DRUNK
HE GETS MEAN. HE BEATS HIS
FAMILY. SOMETIMES HE THES ME
UP TO THE BACK OF THE HOUSE.
OTHER TIMES HE LOCKS ME
IN THE GARAGE. SAM LOVES ME
DRINK BLOOD. SAM LOVES TO
GO OUT AND KILL COMMANDS
FATHER SAM. SAM
BEHIND OUR HOUSE SOME
REST. MOSTLY YOUNG-RAID
AND SLAUGHTERED. THEIR
BLOOD DRAINED - JUST 1300
NOW
PAPA SAM KEEPS ME LOCK
IN THE ATTIC TOO. I CANT
GET OUT BUT I LOOK OUT
ATTIC WINDOW AND WATCH
THE WORLD GO BY.
I FEEL LIKE AN ANGEL
ELSE - PROGRAMMED TOO
KILL
HOWEVER TO STOP ME YOU
MUST KILL ME. ATTENTION
ALL POLICE: SHOOT ME FIRST
TO KILL OR ELSE
OUT OF MY WAY OR
WILL DIE!
PAPA SAM IS OLD NOW.
NEEDS SOME BLOOD TO
SERVE HIS YOUTH.
HAS HAD TOO MANY
ART ATTACKS. TOO MANY
ART ATTACKS. "UGH ME
AT IT UITS SONNY BOY."
I MISS MY PRETTY
INCESS MOST OF ALL.
E'S RESTING IN
OUR LADIES HOUSE
UT ILL SEE HER SOON.
I AM THE "MONSTER" -
FEELZE DUB - THE
HUBB-J BEHEMOUTH.

I SAY GOODBYE AND
GOODNIGHT.
POLICE- LET ME
HAYNT YOU WITH THESE
WORDS;
I'LL BE BACK!
I'LL BE BACK!
TO BE INTERPRETTED
AS- BANG, BANG, BANG,
BANG, BANG - UGH!!
YOURS IN
MURDER
MR. MONSTER

"Let's see how ready you are OK," the killer wrote in a crazed yet threatening letter to police officer Joseph Borrelli.

"I'll be back! I'll be back!" Berkowitz warned the police, and signed the letter "Mr Monster".



BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

On 10th August 1977, a seemingly cheerful Berkowitz was arrested and driven to the police station.

another chilling letter: "I am still here. Like a spirit roaming the night. Thirsty, hungry, seldom stopping to rest; anxious to please Sam. I love my work."

The police in New York put every effort into catching the serial killer. Nearly 400 men were incorporated into the so-called Omega task force, set up to concentrate exclusively on apprehending Son of Sam. However, it would be another month before a breakthrough came. First, somebody else had to be sacrificed.

On 31st July 1977, Stacy Moskowitz and Bobby Violante were in Bobby's car, under a street lamp on Shore Parkway in Brooklyn. The spot was right across from a park, and known as a hangout for young couples. Stacy and

Bobby were in the middle of a kiss when a deafening bang from a Bulldog revolver shattered the idyll. The shots were fired at close range through the car window, bursting Bobby's eardrums. He'd been shot in both eyes. He could see nothing – but he heard Stacy's screams and felt her panicked grip on his arm. Then she let go and became silent.

"We've been shot, we've been shot," Bobby shouted, tumbling out of the car door, while the killer had fled through the park.

Son of Sam had killed for the sixth time: 20-year-old Stacy died of her

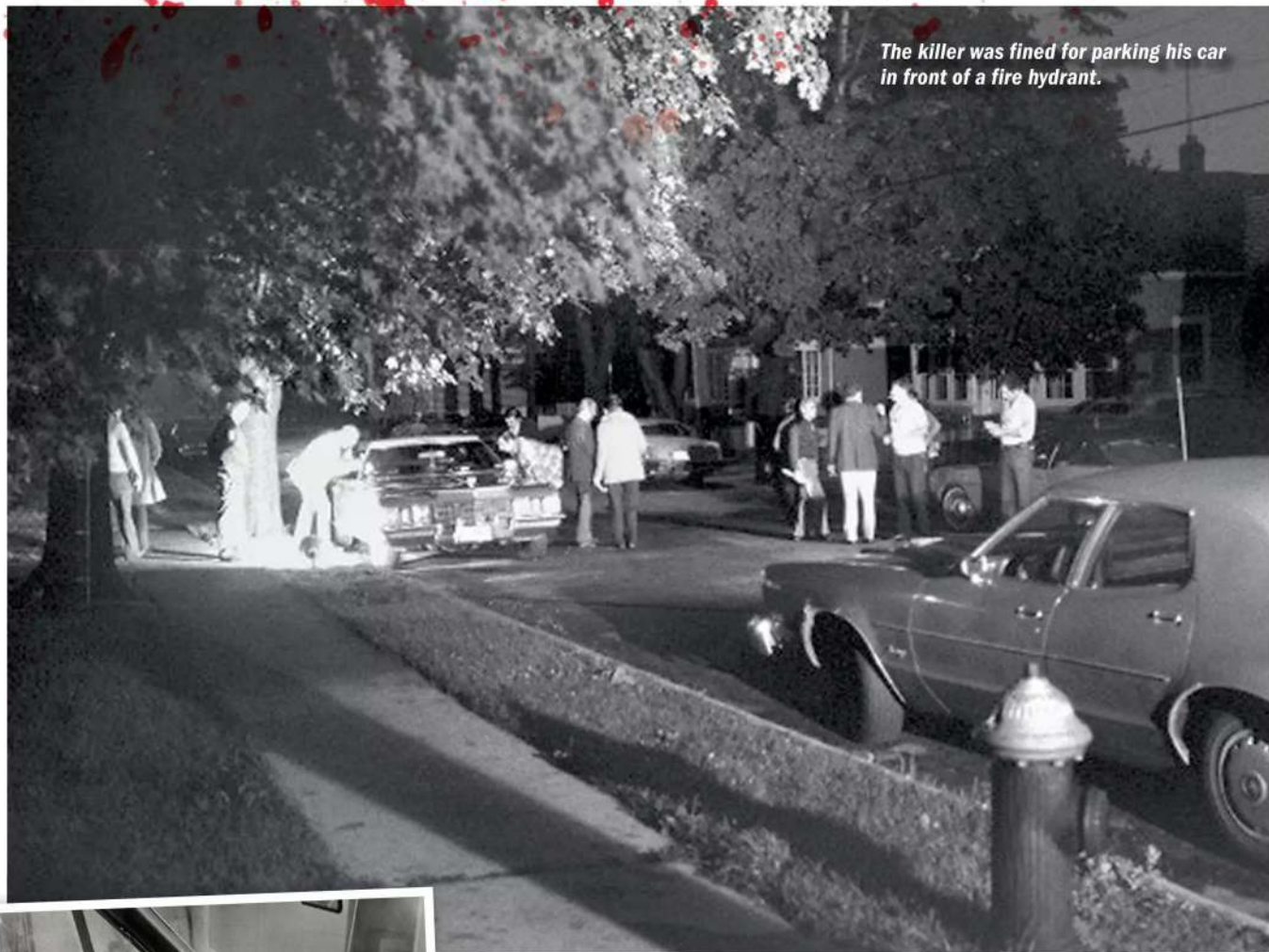
injuries. The seventh victim, Bobby, survived but lost his sight.

The attack turned out to be David Berkowitz's last. In a stroke of luck for the police, Berkowitz had been fined for parking his yellow

Ford Galaxie in front of a fire hydrant somewhere near the park. A local resident had seen a stocky motorist throw away a parking ticket in irritation, and the witness had also noticed that the man looked

as though he might have been concealing a firearm up his sleeve. The stranger had briefly made eye contact with the witness and had smiled so peculiarly that she at first didn't dare >>>

3 psychiatric reports stated that the killer was fit to be tried and sentenced.



The killer was fined for parking his car in front of a fire hydrant.

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



Maps and pieces of the parking ticket that led to Berkowitz's arrest were found in his car.

contact the police, so they only received the tip a few days later.

It soon became clear that a 24-year-old New Yorker called David Berkowitz was the owner of the car. When a dog owner in Yonkers approached the police at the same time about some threatening letters he'd received, the pieces began to fall into place. The dog owner believed the sender must have been his neighbour, David Berkowitz, who had probably also shot and wounded his black Labrador. The police compared the threatening letters to those from Son of Sam. There was no shadow of a doubt – the handwriting matched. On 10th August 1977, a large number of Omega officers moved into Yonkers and spread out around the area near Berkowitz's apartment. They waited for several hours for the suspect to leave his

building and get into his yellow car, which was parked right outside.

Six hours later, Berkowitz finally stepped out of the door. He unlocked his car and got in, but before he could

“When father Sam gets drunk he gets mean. Sometimes ... locks me in the garage”

Berkowitz in a letter to the police.

turn the ignition key, two officers rushed forward on opposite sides of the vehicle. “Freeze, police!” shouted one of the officers, pulling open the door and aiming his gun at David Berkowitz.

“Well, you got me,” said the man in the driver's seat calmly. “What have I

got?" asked the officer. "I'm Sam," David Berkowitz replied.

Bars offered free drinks

Inside the yellow Ford Galaxie, the police found the Bulldog revolver that had caused so much death and pain, and they also discovered a letter in the glove compartment that threatened an assault on Long Island. This time, the message was addressed to Detective Inspector Timothy Dowd, head of the Omega task force.

Berkowitz's murderous odyssey, however, was finally over. And when the news of the arrest was announced, New Yorkers flowed out on to the streets and into the bars, which were giving away free drinks.

Meanwhile, detectives questioned the killer, who sat quietly on a chair, smiling smugly. During the interrogation, Berkowitz explained that it was the local dogs – primarily his neighbour's black Labrador – that had ordered him to commit the murders.

The dog, which according to Berkowitz was the Devil himself, told the killer with its barking where and when he should strike. Because the Labrador's owner was called Sam Carr, the name Son of Sam was linked by the media to the dog's owner.

During the investigation, it was suggested that Berkowitz might have been mentally ill at the time of the murders, so not fit for punishment, but should receive appropriate treatment instead. Forensic psychiatrists questioned him for hours to find out how ill he was. The conclusion was that Berkowitz was sufficiently aware of his actions, so should be sentenced – he had consistently carried out the attacks at night and had left the crime scene extremely quickly every time. According to the experts, a mentally ill person would neither choose specific times nor hurry away. Berkowitz, on the other hand, had an urge to kill, and when he felt it, he spent a long time

scanning the streets and waiting for the right moment to strike.

A messy mind

In June 1978, David Berkowitz was sentenced to a total of 365 years in prison for murder and assault. Due to his confused mind, the killer first stayed in a psychiatric ward, after which he was transferred to Attica High Security Prison in New York State.

Several years later, in 2016,

Berkowitz changed his mind, denying that Sam Carr's dog had ordered him to commit the crimes.

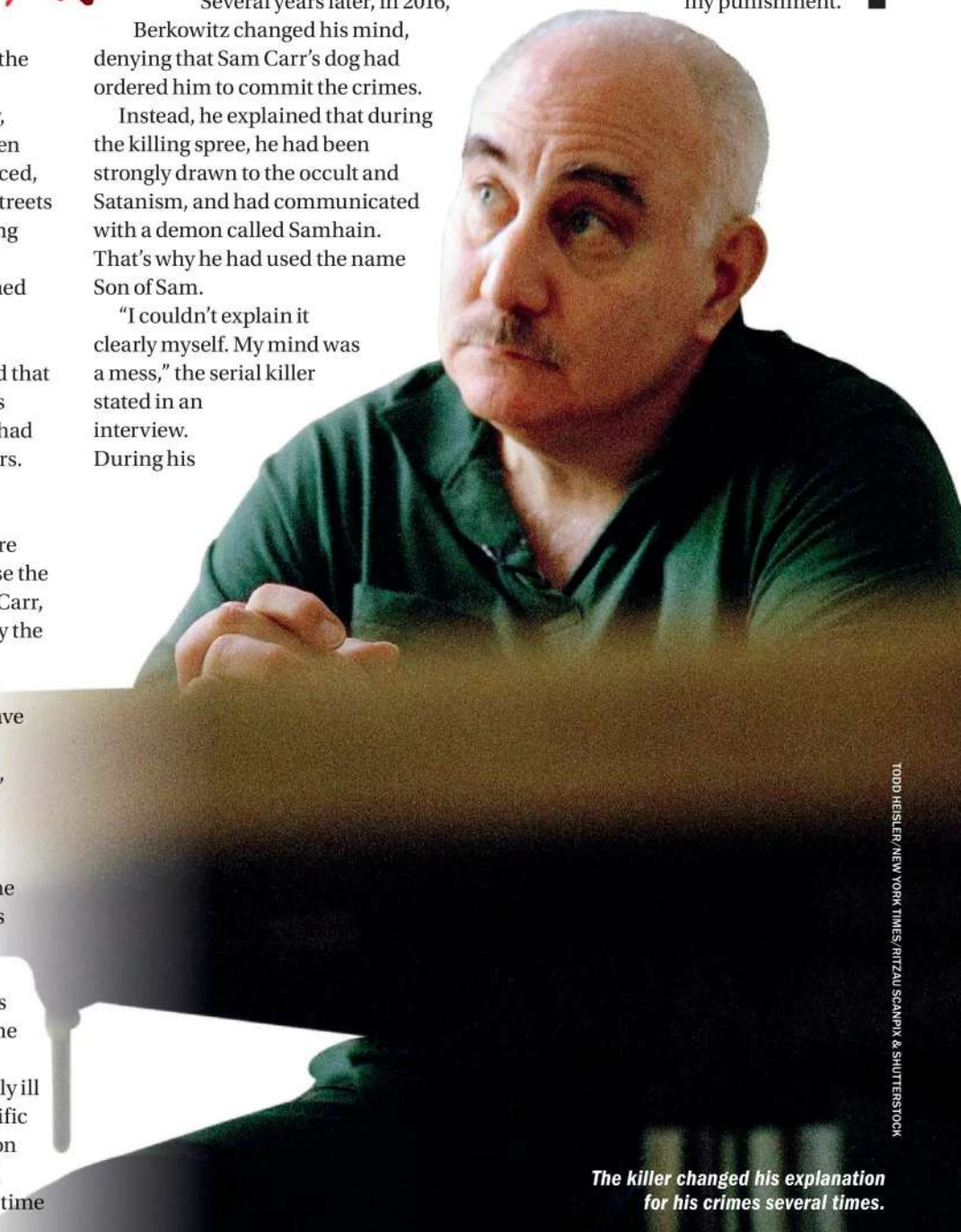
Instead, he explained that during the killing spree, he had been strongly drawn to the occult and Satanism, and had communicated with a demon called Samhain. That's why he had used the name Son of Sam.

"I couldn't explain it clearly myself. My mind was a mess," the serial killer stated in an interview. During his

imprisonment, Berkowitz has repeatedly changed the explanation he's given for his crimes. There have even been theories that claim he didn't kill all the victims himself, but was helped by members of a satanic cult. Today, the killer claims to be a different person and no longer hears voices or communicates with demons. However, he has accepted his verdict:

"I believe that I deserve to be in prison for the rest of my life. I have, with God's help, long ago come to terms with my situation and have accepted my punishment." ■

1,400 small fires were believed to have been lit by Berkowitz around New York.



TODD HEISLER/NEW YORK TIMES/RITZAU SCANPIX & SHUTTERSTOCK

The killer changed his explanation for his crimes several times.



EDMUND EMIL KEMPER

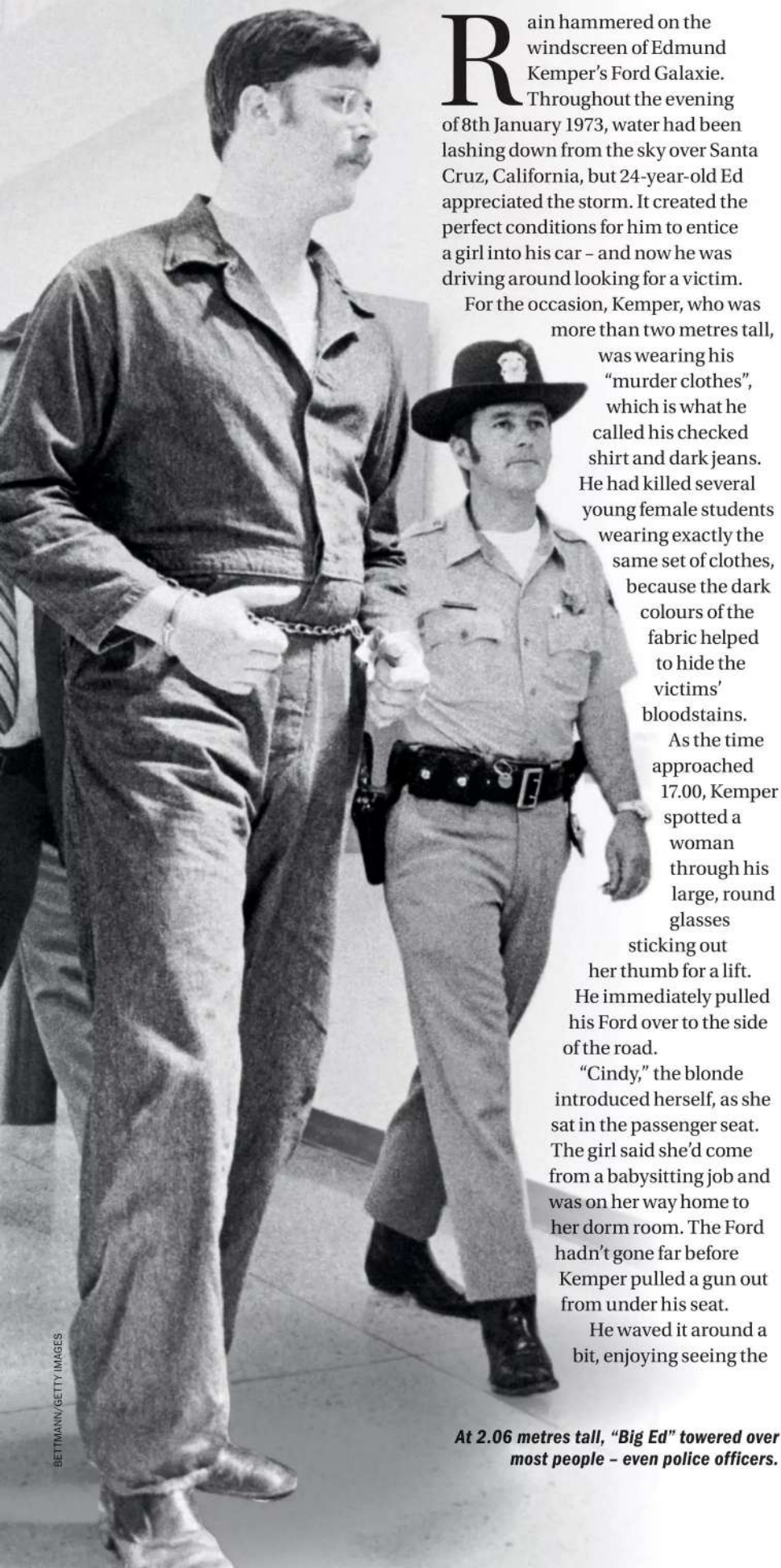
"The Co-ed Killer"

- **CLASSIFICATION:** Serial killer
- **TRADEMARKS:** Necrophilia and dissecting his victims
- **NUMBER OF VICTIMS:** 10
- **MURDER METHODS:** Shooting, stabbing, strangulation and hammer blow
- **LOCATION:** California, USA
- **STATUS:** Sentenced to life in November 1973

A dark wooden chair with a checkered floor in the background.

Brutal serial killer: Went drinking with police

1973 Strong as an ox, highly intelligent, yet with a serious mental illness – “Big Ed” is one of history’s most terrifying serial killers. He visited bars to share stories with the local cops, all while fantasising about killing young women and dissecting them.



Rain hammered on the windscreen of Edmund Kemper's Ford Galaxie. Throughout the evening of 8th January 1973, water had been lashing down from the sky over Santa Cruz, California, but 24-year-old Ed appreciated the storm. It created the perfect conditions for him to entice a girl into his car – and now he was driving around looking for a victim.

For the occasion, Kemper, who was more than two metres tall, was wearing his “murder clothes”, which is what he called his checked shirt and dark jeans. He had killed several young female students wearing exactly the same set of clothes, because the dark colours of the fabric helped to hide the victims' bloodstains.

As the time approached 17.00, Kemper spotted a woman through his large, round glasses sticking out her thumb for a lift. He immediately pulled his Ford over to the side of the road.

“Cindy,” the blonde introduced herself, as she sat in the passenger seat. The girl said she'd come from a babysitting job and was on her way home to her dorm room. The Ford hadn't gone far before Kemper pulled a gun out from under his seat.

He waved it around a bit, enjoying seeing the

girl's terrified gaze. Cindy begged and pleaded with the giant of a man not to kill her, but Kemper said he just wanted someone to talk to.

The Ford drove for hours, further and further through the Californian hills, until Kemper turned on to a small, deserted side road. The large man again pulled out his gun and forced his victim back into the boot. Cindy's protests failed to help, and finally she lay down in tears on a blanket. Kemper wanted to rape her, but couldn't quite bring himself to do it. Instead, he placed the gun barrel against the teenager's head and fired.

“Just a noise and absolute, absolute stillness,” he later commented.

The killer slammed the boot closed and drove home to his mother, with whom he lived. Luckily, his neighbours weren't home. As the rain poured down, he dragged Cindy's body into his room. He pushed the corpse into a wardrobe and just managed to wash the blood off himself before his mother, Clarnell, appeared in the doorway.

That evening, mother and son sat together and talked, but all the time Kemper's thoughts were on the body in the wardrobe. He could hardly wait for his mother to go to work the next day so he could get started on the second part of his plan.

Clarnell Kemper considered her son a useless fool. She had no idea that he was a wanted serial killer with a habit of dissecting his victims – nor that Kemper had cruel plans for herself.

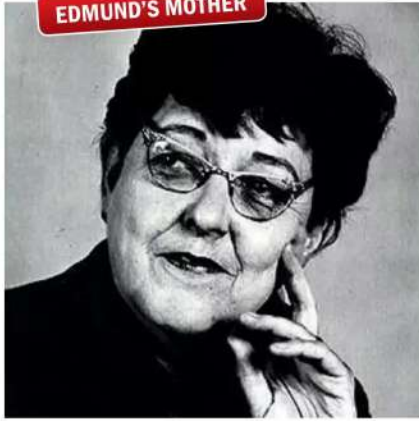
Family's cats were chopped up

Edmund Emil Kemper hadn't had an easy childhood. He was born in Burbank, California, in 1948, and was still very young when he witnessed his parents yelling at each other. His mother, Clarnell, would get angry with her husband, whom she considered a great disappointment because he didn't earn enough money. She also felt that he was too soft on Ed, but too harsh on the couple's two daughters.

The couple divorced when Kemper was nine years old, and after that he rarely saw his father. But Ed missed him dearly, especially because Clarnell, who was frequently drunk, tormented

At 2.06 metres tall, “Big Ed” towered over most people – even police officers.

EDMUND'S MOTHER



Clarnell Kemper was abusive and often criticised her son, and said that he couldn't get a girlfriend.

him constantly. It was worse at night, when she forced her son down into a windowless basement room. He slept there on a mat for eight months until his father found out what was happening. "He was terrified of this place. There was only one way out. Someone had to move the kitchen table and lift the trapdoor. I put a stop to it and threatened her with the law," his father later reported.

Kemper stayed with his mother, but his behaviour became more and more bizarre. He beheaded his sisters' dolls, and one day he buried the family's cat alive in the backyard only to later dig up the body and cut off its head. As a 13-year-old, he punished his own Siamese cat in the same way, because it preferred to spend time with his sisters rather than with him. Kemper constantly quarrelled with his dictatorial mother, and eventually his father arranged for him to live on his grandparents' farm. In response, Clarnell drunkenly grabbed the phone and called her ex-husband:

"That guy is a real weirdo. ... You might be surprised to wake up some morning to learn [your parents] have been killed."

Had grandmother in his sights

For 15-year-old Ed, only one other person was anywhere near as awful as his mother: his grandmother Maude, a brusque, domineering woman, who was always taunting her grandson.

"I couldn't please her. ... I became a walking time bomb and I finally blew,"

explained Kemper after his arrest. One hot August day in 1964, the teenage boy was sitting alone at the kitchen table with Maude, who asked him not to stare so strangely. Ed pushed his chair back, grabbed his rifle, and said he was going out to shoot rabbits.

"All right, but mind you don't shoot the birds," Maude retorted.

Kemper felt an explosive rage. He aimed his rifle at his grandma's head. A bang resounded in the kitchen, and blood splattered from Maude's nose and mouth. Two more shots in the back ensured his grandma was dead. He pulled her body into his grandparents' bedroom and briefly considered undressing her, but decided against it.

Just then, Ed heard his grandfather's car pull up outside. The 72-year-old had

been shopping and was standing by the vehicle, removing his groceries from the front seat, when Kemper fired a bullet into his grandfather's head. For a moment, Ed panicked and tried to hide the evidence, but quickly realised that the deaths couldn't be explained away as accidents.

Instead, he called the local sheriff, who came over to the farm. The boy confessed to having committed the murders, and when the astonished officer wanted to know why, Kemper calmly replied, "I just wondered how it would feel to shoot Grandma."

"When I see a pretty girl, one side of me says 'I'd like to date her.' The other side of me says, 'I wonder how her head would look on a stick.'"

Held with sex offenders

Kemper briefly ended up in juvenile detention, but when a psychiatrist spoke to the young killer, he concluded that Ed was a paranoid schizophrenic, so he was sent for »»

■ SERIAL KILLER TOWN

Idyllic California coastal town became a killers' wonderland

In the early 1960s, Santa Cruz in California was known as a peaceful seaside town. The 30,000 inhabitants included surfers, pensioners and hippies, who lived a carefree life. From 1965, students also began to arrive in the city, which was given its own campus of the University of California.

The easy-going lifestyle of Santa Cruz prompted young people to hitch-hike when they travelled around – and that practice made them easy prey for devious killers.

At the same time as Edmund Kemper was operating, serial killer Herbert Mullin was also at work. He killed 13, believing the deaths would prevent earthquakes in

Santa Cruz was famous for its beach life, but from 1970 became renowned for brutal serial killers.

California. The year before Kemper and Mullin were killing, in 1971–72, another mass murderer was active in Santa Cruz. Known as "The Killer Prophet", John Linley Frazier killed an ophthalmologist, his family and secretary. The religious fanatic claimed that God had ordered him to commit the murders.



SANTA CRUZ MAH

treatment at California's Atascadero State Hospital.

At the hospital, Dr William Schanberger was in daily contact with Ed, and the psychiatrist quickly sensed that the teenager was "a bright fellow" – so intelligent that he scored 136 in an IQ test. Schanberger therefore gave the young inmate a job in the hospital's research laboratory, where the psychiatrists soon came to regard him as "a very good worker". As the years passed, Kemper appeared more and more normal, because the intelligent killer understood what the doctors wanted him to say – and he obliged.

"He has made a very excellent response to the years of treatment and rehabilitation and I would see no psychiatric reason to consider him to be of any danger to himself or to any member of society," a psychiatrist wrote in a report, shortly before Kemper's juvenile records were expunged.

Kemper hadn't said a word to the doctors about all the other things he'd learned in the hospital, which housed

hundreds of the worst sex offenders in the US. The young Ed had heard about rape and other brutal abuse – a world that fascinated him so much that he'd begun to have violent sexual fantasies.

Students had no idea

Psychiatrists had recommended that Kemper shouldn't have anything to do

"I just wondered how it would feel to shoot Grandma"

15-YEAR-OLD ED KEMPER

with his mother after his release, yet the Californian authorities sent him back to his mother's custody. Although he'd been away from home for six years, little had changed. The quarrels flared

up again, and each time, Ed ended up storming out of the home in Santa Cruz, where his mother now lived. He often went to a bar called the Jury Room, where local police officers liked to go after work. Kemper drank beer with them and looked up to the men in blue uniforms. He wanted to be a cop himself, but was now a fully grown man of over two metres in height and weighing 125 kilograms – a colossus of a human being, far too tall to become a police officer. Instead, he was periodically employed by the state highway department. His size earned him the nickname "Big Ed" down at the Jury Room, where no one enquired about his past.

Kemper also relieved his frustrations in other ways. He would drive hundreds of miles in his car around the area between San Francisco and Santa Cruz, and often passed young female hitch-hikers. After a while, he started picking them up. He enjoyed their company – not least their vulnerability – and couldn't fail to link them with the

Girls were lured into a mobile death trap

Kemper drove around California in his Ford Galaxie 500, which was his main tool when killing. He'd thought about every detail, so once the hitch-hikers were enticed into the car, they never got out again.

1

Listened to police reports

His car radio had been replaced with a police radio, so that Kemper could find out where officers were patrolling and whether they'd found his victims.

2

Pretended to be a student

A parking permit for the University of Santa Cruz sat on the car's windscreen and fooled hitch-hikers into believing Kemper was one of them. He'd never been a student, but got the sticker from his mother, who had an administrative job at the university.



violent fantasies that had developed in his head.

On 7th May 1972, Kemper could no longer keep his urges in check. He'd learned to appear calm and friendly, so hitch-hikers didn't feel threatened by his size. That's why Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchessa jumped in when he stopped at 16.00 in Fresno. The 18-year-olds were students at Fresno State College and were going to visit a friend.

Kemper sensed that the girls didn't know the area well, so pulled off the main road and drove his Ford Galaxie towards a deserted spot. As he turned on to a side road, the girls realised they were in trouble. Any doubt disappeared when Kemper pulled out a gun.

"What do you want?" asked one of the students.

"You know what I want."

Mary Ann tried desperately to make him see reason, but in vain. She was

handcuffed inside the car as Kemper grabbed the quieter Anita and put her in the boot. Without Anita being able to see, he stabbed Mary Ann repeatedly with a knife until she lay lifeless.

He went back to Anita in the boot, and when she asked what had happened to her friend, Ed Kemper replied: "She was getting smart with me." He said that he'd broken Mary Ann's nose, and told Anita that she should go and help her.

When Anita got out of the boot, Ed pulled out a large knife and stabbed her in the back. The 18-year-old girl didn't collapse, however, but tried to fight off the attack. Kemper attempted to slash her throat, but she blocked him with her arms, which were cut and bleeding. He kept stabbing her and watched with fascination as she screamed and reacted differently to each cut. Only after countless deep wounds did the

girl stop moving. Kemper then dismembered the corpses and cut off their heads. He burned the bodies in the mountains while keeping the heads both as trophies and to slow down any police investigation. He took pride in not being caught like the chumps he had encountered at the state hospital.

Turned on by beheading

Four months after the murders of Mary Ann and Anita, Kemper picked up 15-year-old Aiko Koo. She was on her »

Kemper's car was searched by the police, who found traces of blood in it.



5 Ready for dissection

The boot was filled with plastic bags and a blue blanket, which Kemper used to cover the corpses so that they weren't just loose in the boot. He also had an axe that he used to chop off the women's heads.

3 Locked passengers inside

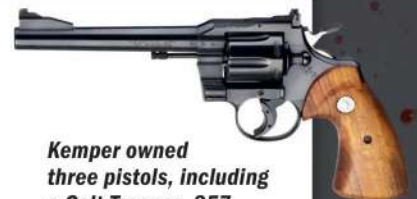
Kemper could jam the lock on the passenger door. When a girl got into the car, he said that the door hadn't closed properly. Before slamming it, he secretly stuck a stick of lip balm into the mechanism so that the door could no longer be opened from the inside.

4 Avoided attention

The back of the car had been hit – to Kemper's great annoyance, because the damage made the vehicle easy to recognise. He couldn't afford a repair; instead, he fixed the damage himself so that the rear light worked again and he didn't risk being stopped by the police.

6 Hidden gun

Under the driver's seat, Kemper hid a pistol, which he pulled out when he was ready to kill his victims. After the murder of his grandparents, he shouldn't really have been able to buy a firearm, but during the psychiatric treatment in prison, he convinced doctors that he no longer posed a threat, so his criminal record was erased.



Kemper owned three pistols, including a Colt Trooper .357.



way to a dance class when a murderous compulsion came over him again. As soon as Koo got into the car, she sensed danger – and when she saw Kemper's gun, she panicked. "Big Ed", however, managed to convince the teenager that he wasn't planning to kill her, but himself. If Koo remained calm, Kemper

"If I killed them, they couldn't reject me as a man"

ED KEMPER

promised that nothing would happen to her.

Ed Kemper drove to a secluded, desolate place outside Santa Cruz. Here he taped the teenager's mouth closed and tried to suffocate her by blocking her nostrils with his fingers. Koo fainted, and Kemper decided to rape her before trying to suffocate her again. The serial killer only stopped when he was sure the 15-year-old was no longer breathing. Kemper took the body home to cut it up. He also cut off her head – the beheading was a thrilling ritual. "There was actually a sexual thrill ... like taking the head of a deer or an elk ...

would be to a hunter. I was the hunter and they were the victims," the killer revealed during interrogation.

A similar fate befell babysitter Cindy Schall, whom Kemper shot in the forehead in January 1973, while she was lying in the boot of his Ford Galaxie.

As soon as his mother, Clarnell, had gone to work, Kemper took Cindy's body out of the wardrobe and had sexual intercourse with it. Her body was dissected and scattered outside Santa Cruz, but the killer kept her severed head for several weeks until he finally buried it in the backyard – just outside his mother's bedroom. The location was a sarcastic nod to Clarnell, who according to Kemper always wanted people "to look up to her". Now a dead face would stare up at his mother every night without her knowing.

Friends with police

Problems with his mother continued, and after a violent quarrel on 8th February 1973, Kemper was overcome by the urge to kill again. He picked up two students, Rosalind Thorpe and Alice Liu, at the University of California, Santa Cruz. After shooting them both in his car, he drove back to his

mother's house. As she sat watching TV, he cut off the girls' heads in the drive.

In the late winter of 1973, terror began to spread among Santa Cruz's residents as the bodies of murdered young women were found. Most recently, the bodies of Rosalind and Alice had appeared, and the media dubbed the murderer "The Co-ed Killer" because it was clearly an assailant who targeted "co-eds" – female college students. In cooperation with the police, universities in the area warned young women.

"Stay in dorms after midnight with doors locked. If you must go out at night – walk in pairs. DON'T HITCH A RIDE!" was posted on noticeboards in the university towns.

The warnings didn't stop Kemper from hanging out in the Jury Room, where the off-duty police officers imagined that "Big Ed" would never hurt a fly.

"He had a great personality. He was very friendly, very outgoing," recalled Officer Jim Conner, who often spoke to Kemper at the bar.

In the Jury Room, the serial killer kept his ears open to hear the latest news about the mutilated victims that had been found in the area. "Big Ed" >>>

"I was admiring my work and admiring her beauty, and I might say, admiring my catch like a fisherman."

Ed Kemper has 10 lives on his conscience

With a knife, pistol and stranglehold, Kemper acted as a demonic executioner.



1964
Maude Kemper

27th August: Grandmother is shot by Kemper with a rifle.



1964
Ed Kemper

27th August: Grandfather is shot soon after Maude.



1972
Mary Ann Pesce

7th May: Kemper kills Mary Ann while she's handcuffed in his car.



1972
Anita Luchessa

7th May: Anita is killed after repeated cuts and stabs with a large knife.



1972
Aiko Koo

14th September: Kemper strangles the 15-year-old teenager.

■ HELPED INVESTIGATION

Kemper confessed all

During talks with the FBI, “Big Ed” willingly confessed everything. He seemed calm and composed when describing the background of his cruel acts.

“Maybe they can study me and find out what makes people like me do the things they do.”

Such was Edmund Kemper’s reaction to FBI agent John Douglas request to talk to him in 1979. Through conversations with Kemper and other serial killers and mass murderers, the FBI wanted to get inside the minds of such criminals and understand what drove them to act the way they did – and no one was more open than “Big Ed”.

“[He] opened up and talked about himself for hours. His attitude was neither cocky and arrogant nor remorseful and contrite,” Douglas

commented afterwards.

The FBI agent also spoke to killers such as Ted Bundy and Charles Manson, but according to Douglas, Kemper probably had “the highest IQ of any killer I’ve ever encountered”, and the serial killer was very insightful in his observations. Kemper was aware that he “had never fit in” with society. His mother’s dismissive behaviour while growing up, combined with his sexual fantasies,

After Kemper was taken into custody, he was willing to reveal where the bodies were buried.

drove him to his savage crimes. Kemper’s cynical comments to the FBI agent also clearly demonstrated that he was not well.



BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

Kemper kept trophies from his victims, in particular clothes and university IDs.



TROPHIES



1973
Cindy Schall

8th January: Shot. Kemper subsequently had sex with the body.



1973
Rosalind Thorpe

8th February: Shot in Kemper’s car while it was still in motion.



1973
Alice Lui

8th February: Shot right after Rosalind while in the back seat.



1973
Clarnell Strandberg

20th April: Kemper’s hated mother is killed with a hammer while she sleeps.



1973
Sally Hallett

20th April: Mother’s friend is strangled in Kemper’s last murder.

hung out with the officers as if he were “one of the boys” while they talked over the investigation. To his great satisfaction, he could tell that the police had got nowhere.

But as the months went by, the police found more and more corpses of girls who’d been killed by “The Co-ed Killer” – even though he’d tried to hide them. Kemper felt the net was tightening around him and was convinced that his friends in the Jury Room had their eye on him.

Ed decided it was time for the final showdown. He had to kill his mother while he still had the chance.

Hammer blow ended connection

Ever since Kemper had been trapped in the basement as a boy, hatred for his mother had built up inside him – and it had only grown stronger after each of their many quarrels. Psychiatrists subsequently thought that Kemper might have killed the six young women as a substitute for killing his mother. On 20th April 1973, Clarnell came home late from town, and when her son

greeted her in the bedroom, she said angrily: “What are you doing up? I suppose you want to talk?” Kemper replied: “No. ... Good night.”

In that moment, he knew she was going to die. Later, when he was quite sure that his mother was sleeping heavily, he picked up a hammer and

“When I was in the mood for it, the person didn’t have a chance”

ED KEMPER

a penknife, and went into Clarnell’s bedroom. Ed watched her for a few minutes before raising the hammer and striking it down on her temple. Blood began trickling down the sheet, but as Ed thrust the knife into his mother’s neck, it started to flow out profusely. Eventually, her head was completely separated from her body. He

placed the head on a shelf, screamed at it for an hour, threw darts at it, and had sex with it. Eventually, he cut out the tongue and larynx.

“It seemed appropriate, as much as she’d bitched and screamed and yelled at me over so many years,” he later said.

Ed Kemper decided that it was not enough just to kill his mother – “someone else had to die too, a friend of hers”. So, he called Clarnell’s friend, Sally Hallett, and asked her to come over for a surprise dinner Kemper was preparing for his mother that evening.

When Hallett arrived at 20.00, she walked directly towards the sofa.

“Let’s sit down. I’m dead,” she said, just before Ed put his hands around her neck and lifted her up off the floor until her body no longer struggled.

He then fell into a restless sleep next to the body. When he awoke, he realised that he wouldn’t be able to explain away this murder. He left the crime scene in Hallett’s car, but first left a note for his friends from the Jury Room: “Not sloppy and incomplete, gents. Just a ‘lack of time’.”

Killer reported himself

For more than two days, Kemper drove around restlessly before ending up in Colorado in the central United States. He felt exhausted and on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

On the night of 24th April 1973, he stopped the car at a telephone box in the town of Pueblo. Kemper grabbed the phone and called the Santa Cruz police station, where his friends from the Jury Room worked.

The officer on duty thought Kemper was winding him up, and put the phone down. Only when Officer Jim Conner picked up the phone in the morning and Kemper shouted about “co-ed killing” did they realise he was serious.

While the patrol car was on its way, Kemper told Conner about the ten killings. Slowly, the killer calmed down.

“[W]hat I’m saying is, there is a break somewhere. I can’t tell you what’s wrong with me,” “Big Ed” said desperately. Soon after, a patrol car pulled up beside him.

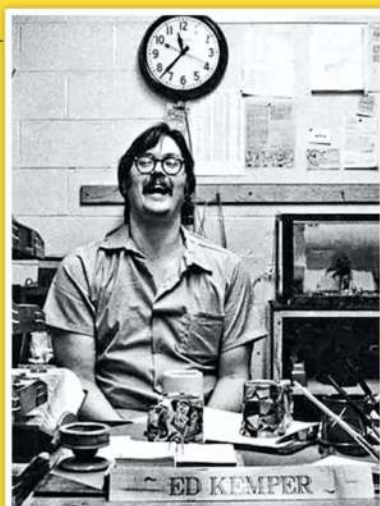
“The man’s here. Whew! He’s got a gun on me,” Ed told the officer on the

■ LIFE IN PRISON

“Big Ed” is model prisoner

Ed Kemper has spent more than 48 years at the California Medical Facility and, from day one, his behaviour has been exemplary. A few years after being imprisoned in 1973, he started recording audio books for the blind, which have been published by the State of California. The collection has grown to over 5,000 hours of spoken word texts. In 1981, he received public recognition for his work.

At the secure institution, he has rubbed shoulders with Charles Manson and Herbert Mullin, among others. Kemper hates the unruly Mullin, who also terrorised Santa Cruz. “Big Ed” eventually broke Mullin down so much that the killer had to ask Kemper for permission to sing, and was given peanuts by



Kemper had his own office, where he arranged other prisoners’ meetings with psychiatrists.

him as a reward. Kemper has waived his right to a parole hearing several times; according to his lawyer, he is “happy going about his life in prison”, where he is well liked by both staff and fellow prisoners.

JOEY TRANCHINA PHOTOGRAPHY

FBI began investigating serial killers

In the late 1970s, the growing number of serial killers forced the FBI to study what drives people to commit multiple murders. Through conversations with Ed Kemper and others, they studied motives and methods and discovered that there are three types of serial killer.

1. ORGANISED



Ted Bundy tried to charm his way through his trial.

High intelligence and diligence characterise the organised serial killer. This type of murderer is therefore the most difficult to catch. He plans every detail of his crime in advance to make sure no evidence is left behind.

Often, the organised killer watches his victim for several days. After this, they are typically kidnapped – preferably after a practice run. The victim is then driven to a secluded spot where the murder can be committed with little chance of interruption. The organised killer is usually proud of his crime and follows the news of his murders closely.

The intelligent and charming Ted Bundy, who killed 30–50 women in the United States in the 1970s, is an example of an organised serial killer.

2. DISORGANISED



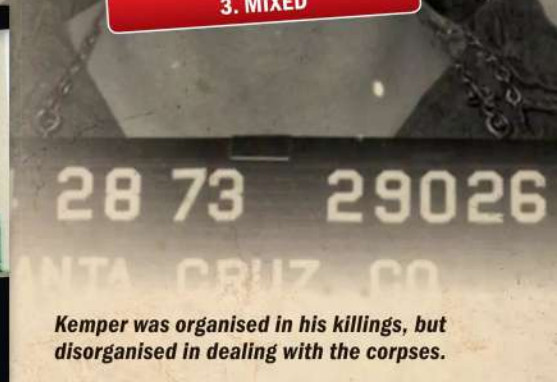
Richard Chase – the “Vampire of Sacramento” – felt compelled to kill.

In the case of the disorganised killer, the crime is rarely planned – the victim is most often chosen by chance.

After the crime, the killer doesn't think about hiding his tracks. A disorganised killer usually has low intelligence and mental health issues, and is a loner. Often he is under the influence of drugs, so can rarely remember his wrongdoings in detail.

A classic example of a disorganised serial killer is Richard Chase, who was better known as the “Vampire of Sacramento”. Chase killed six random people during one month in 1978, so that he could drink their blood. He committed his murders under the delusion that he had to kill in order to prevent Nazis and UFOs from killing him with poison.

3. MIXED



Kemper was organised in his killings, but disorganised in dealing with the corpses.

The FBI's third category has the characteristics of both the organised and the disorganised killer. One such example was Ed Kemper. He was organised and well prepared during the killings of the young hitch-hikers, but his treatment of the corpses was more haphazard and disorganised. He had sexual intercourse with some of the unconscious women, while other times Kemper killed his victims without abusing them.

Through conversations with Kemper and others, the FBI concluded that stress could cause an organised killer to commit disorganised murders. When Ted Bundy fled his trial in 1977, for example, his killings became disorganised – probably because he wasn't thinking clearly while on the run.

phone. The infamous “Co-ed Killer” had finally been captured.

After the arrest, Kemper cooperated unconditionally with the police. He waived all his legal rights and confessed to each murder in front of a tape recorder. Kemper supplied all the

details and was almost proud to finally have the opportunity to demonstrate his excellent powers of recall. He was ready to take his punishment and declared that “I certainly wouldn't trust me in society again”. Even he thought that the only sensible thing would be to

lock him up “in a little room where I can't hurt anybody”, as he put it.

His wish was fulfilled. On 14th November 1973, Kemper received eight life sentences – which he continues to serve at the age of 72, at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville.

Ice cold SERIAL KILLERS

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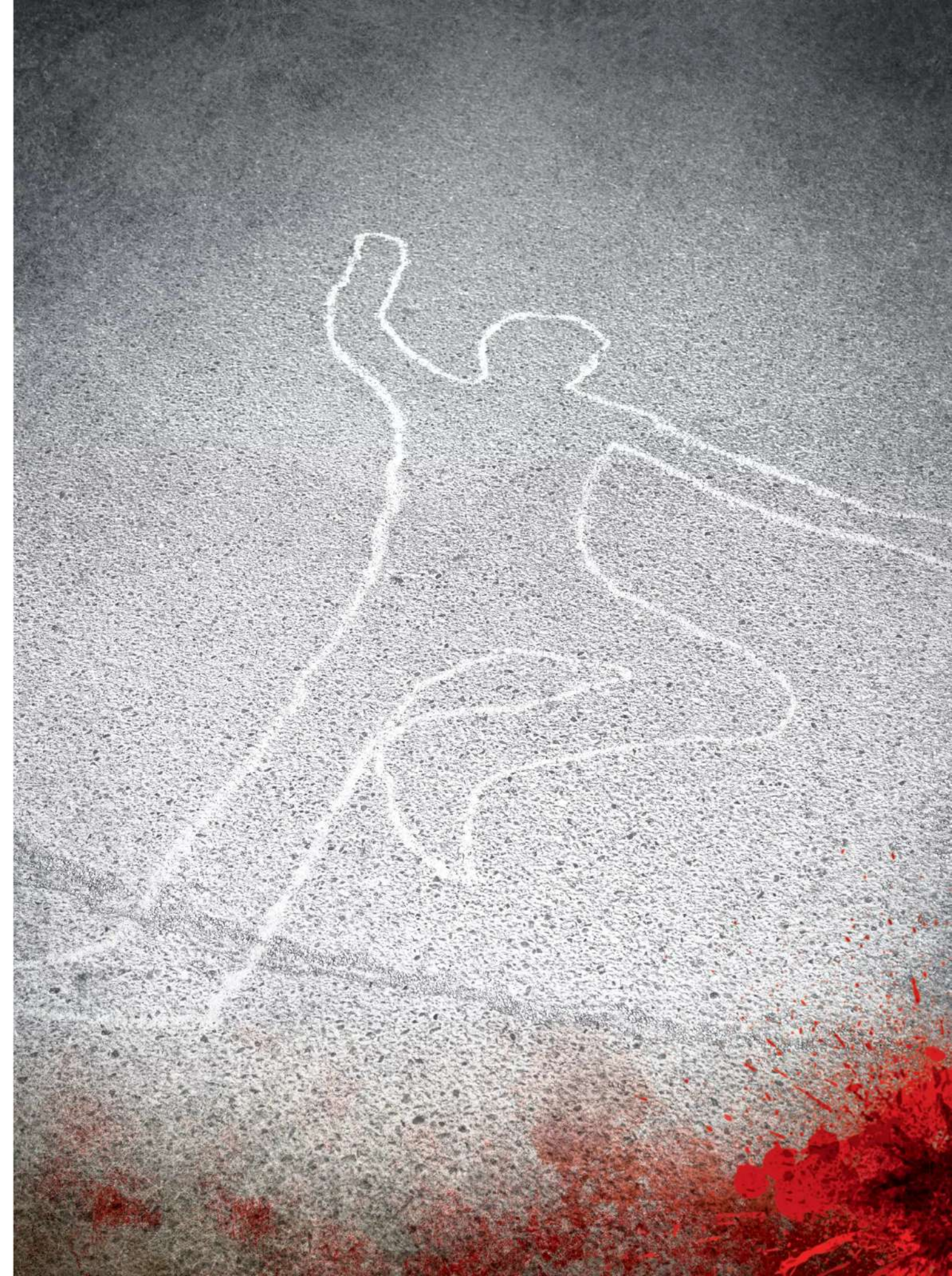
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**“The whole thing – the cries, blood
and agony – gave me pleasure”**

Andrei Chikatilo about his compulsion to kill.

“I’m digging a sandpit for the lad”

Peter Tobin's reply when a neighbour asked why he was digging a huge grave-like hole in his garden.

**“The plan was: I wanted to kill as many
prostitutes as I possibly could”**

Gary Ridgway, Green River Killer, at his trial in 2003.

**“Ted was the only person in my 40 years of being a lawyer
that I would say ... was absolutely born evil”**

Defence attorney John Henry Browne on Ted Bundy.

“I am so crazy that I am relieved by the arrest”

Volker Eckert after police caught him.